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Dissertation

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS PROPHECY

by

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(B.S., Capital University, 1942)

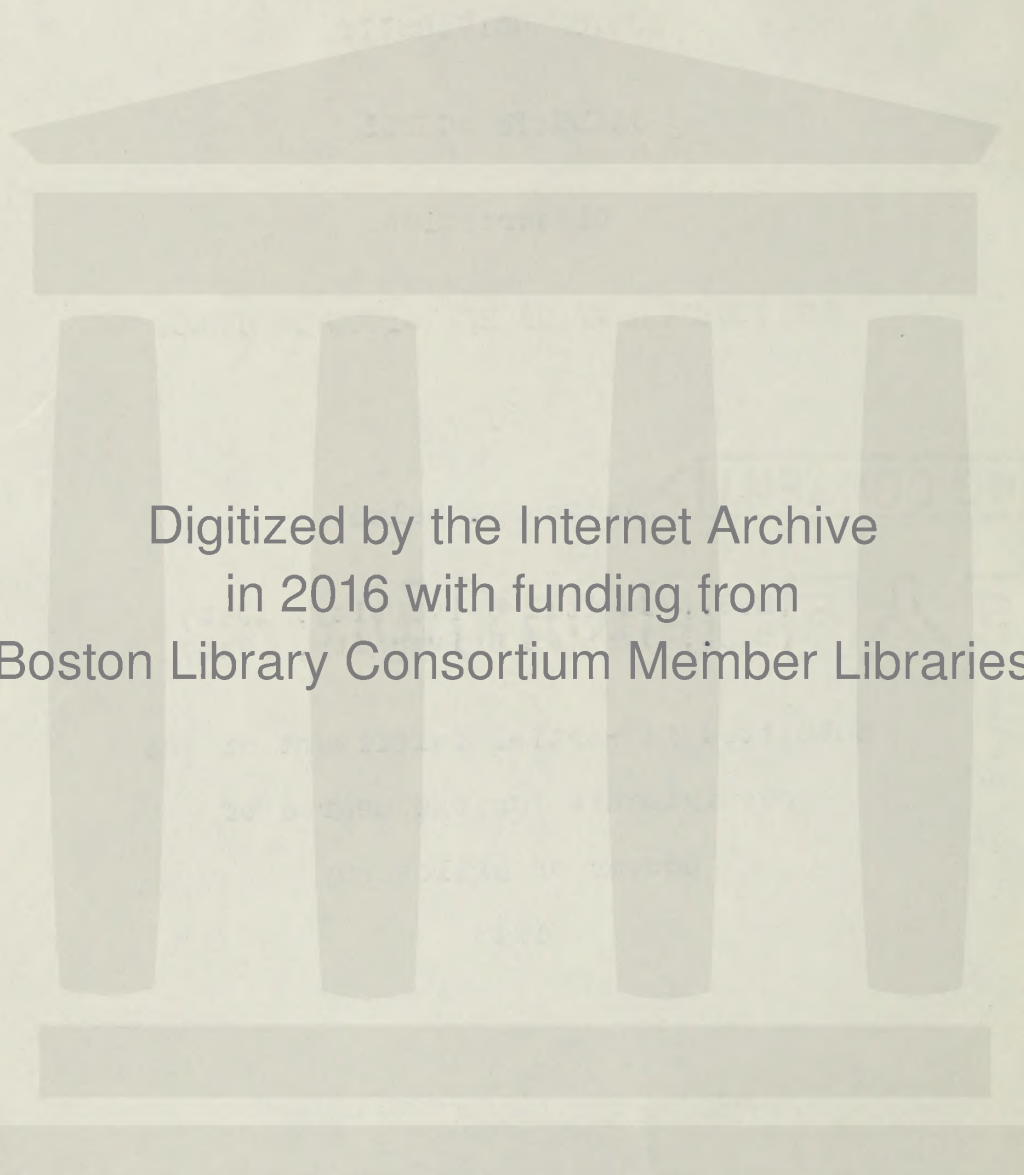
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1948

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CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION

Definition of the problem

Limitations of the study

Approved

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Significance

Importance

Evolution of the problem

II. THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

The problem's origin

The problem's development

The problem's scope

The problem's vision

The problem's history

The problem's present

The problem's consequences of the process

of God







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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

The prophets of the religions of the world have been men of unusual talents and often of outstanding accomplishments. Their office has left an indelible mark on the history of the world, and the contributions of their greater representatives seem only enhanced by the passing of the centuries. The many unusual acts attributed to them have long puzzled those who study their records, and even today, modern prophets often leave us bewildered by their apparently inexplicable performances. The study of the human mind, in its normal, abnormal and paranormal activities, is the study of psychology. To find help in understanding the abilities of the prophet, we turn to this science. The rise of a specialized branch of psychology, parapsychology, attempts to put under scientific investigation many of these peculiar phenomena displayed since the beginning of recorded history by the prophets of religion. We would expect that the data from the experiments in this branch science, together with the entire field of the psychology of personality, would present us with tools that would enable us to grasp a better, even though still limited, understanding of the function of prophecy. The problem of this thesis is to





determine if psychology can enlarge our understanding of the function of prophecy, both in its relation to the prophet, and in its effect on the prophet's people.

The prophet is an outstanding figure in religious history for a reason. His importance is indicative of his meeting a definite need in the spiritual life of mankind. Though the surface characteristics of the prophet may differ in the various religions, there remain definite features and functions which are common to them all. This study will attempt to determine what it was in the character and function of the prophet that earned him reverential respect in his day and has continued to venerate him as a religious pioneer in our day.

Though the psychological approach to understanding the prophet is the one applied in this study, the influence of the prophet's times and culture can not be overlooked as a significant influence on the character of his office. The customs, mores, beliefs and expectations of the culture in which we live are determining factors in the kind of life that we live, the goals we seek and the manner in which we seek them. The great contrast of life in Plymouth Colony of the seventeenth century and in Boston of the twentieth century gives an idea of the differences that can occur in the same nation over a period of time, and if then the diversity between the present day Oriental culture and Occidental culture is noted, we see the dissimilarities that





a geographical distance can create. This contrast is brought out clearly in Swami Akhilananda's recent work, Hindu Psychology.<sup>1</sup> We could not expect a colonial prophet to function as would a twentieth century prophet, nor would it be probable that an American prophet would resemble an Indian prophet. The investigations of this study have endeavored to understand the prophets in the light of the particular cultures in which they lived.

Were it not for the recent developments of psychic research, or parapsychology as it is also called, it is doubtful whether this study would have been made. The data from this branch of psychology have opened a new field of investigation in the psychology of religious prophecy. Previous works have been confined to the principles of psychology as they are limited to the space-time-sense world which our western science has accepted as its only possible field of investigation.<sup>2</sup> It appears that such interpretations of the prophetic function have succeeded only by forcing the prophet's activities into this space-time-sense mold by a sweep of the pen. The primary sources of data have been violated, not to the fault of the investigator, but by the limitation of his workable tools.

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1. Swami Akhilananda, Hindu Psychology (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946).

2. A good example of which is: J. H. Kaplan, Psychology of Prophecy (Philadelphia: Julius H. Greenstone, 1908).





The science of parapsychology investigates the possible existence of those faculties of the human mind which can not, at least at present, be explained by the principles and laws of a space-time-sense world. By the laboratory method this science experiments with the possibility of extrasensory perception and kinetic phenomena inexplicable by the laws of physics. The results of this investigation warrant attention. The limited data available provide possible tools with which to probe deeper into the historical records of the prophets, to attempt to understand the prophetic function with less violence to the primary sources of data, and to do so by means of scientific principles.

Should the attempt thus to interpret the phenomena of religious prophecy prove a possibility, it becomes necessary to correlate this possibility with the established principles of modern psychology. If there is extrasensory perception, and if the prophets were able so to perceive, then the attempt must be made to show how this perception is made available to the human mind. The close affinity of the prophets to the mystics, both in their official functions and in their personal lives, and the limited similarities of the prophets to present day Spiritualist mediums, makes necessary a brief study of these groups also. These investigations, together with the contributions of others







who have made psychological studies of the mystic and medium, make possible the correlation of the prophetic function with the superconscious state of the human mind. It is the thesis of this study that the possibilities inherent in the concept of the superconscious mind, as substantiated by the data of modern psychology, are the most satisfactory means available at our present stage of science for understanding religious prophecy.

Religious prophecy, as it is used in this study, is that function among the religions of the world in which communications from the deity are spontaneously perceived in a paranormal manner by the prophet and are forwarded to the people in a mediative capacity. We frequently think of prophecy as the foretelling of the future, and this was a definite part of that vocation. The prophet, however, did much more than foretell the future; his was an office that placed him in a mediative if not direct communication with God, and distinguished him as a religious leader and a religious genius.

## II. LIMITATIONS OF THE FIELD

The many religions have their myriad prophets. Many books have been written on a single prophet. The nature of this thesis made necessary a general study of the prophets, rather than an exhaustive study of any one prophet, or of the prophets of any one religion. Because prophecy rose to





its highest manifestation among the prophets of Israel, and because most available literature upon the subject of prophecy pertains either directly or indirectly to them, they will have a large share of attention in the study.

The approach to the problem will be limited to the psychological and to the related sociological implications. This limitation serves chiefly to exclude theological concepts. Though the concept of God is now considered a possibility for scientific research,<sup>3</sup> the assumption of the power and intervention of God in a psychological study is at present a contradiction in terms. In a psychological interpretation of the prophetic office, whatever the intervention of God in the prophet's activity, the psychologist is limited to the prophet's part in that intervention. Theology of religious prophecy is a study in itself, beyond the scope of psychology.

Theological controversy therefore is not the concern of this psychological study. The theological schools of thought on Biblical, and in particular, Old Testament interpretation are extremely diverse. The opinions of such scholars as Orelli and Koenig on one hand, and Bade and Torrey on the other, are in many instances contradictory.

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3. J. B. Rhine, "The Relation Between Psychology and Religion," (Copy of talk broadcast from Town Hall, New York, June 11, 1946 on World Faith Round Table series).





It is the purpose of this study to refrain from involvement in this theological controversy. That is another field of investigation. Holscher points out that though historical criticism may question the accuracy of a passage, psychologically it may be correct. Historical criticism he concludes should remain subordinate in a study of this nature.<sup>4</sup> Material used from the Old Testament will be evaluated solely from the psychological and sociological point of view.

There are several barriers to our understanding of prophecy. The language difficulty can not be overlooked. Prophetic experience as will be shown, is ultra-perceptive and paranormal, and hence our understanding of it is seriously limited, being conveyed to us in terminology adapted to experiences of a different nature. There is no language which can describe feelings and experiences to those who have never had such experiences and feelings. An attempt can be made by comparing them to sensations and experiences commonly known, the use of simile and metaphor--and that is what the prophets did. The gap between the original and the reproduction by comparison must be filled in by the imagination.

The cultural differences between the prophet's day and ours, and even between his land and ours, complicates

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4. Gustav Hölscher, Die Propheten (Lepzig: Hinrichs, 1914), p. 3.







the accuracy of our observations. This is a limitation which can be partially eliminated by continued study of the prophet's culture, and by a willingness to appreciate the significance of customs differing from our own. Though we can thus reduce this barrier, we can never remove it, for there is that in the cultures of the prophets that is lost in the irreversible passage of time, and though archeologists may retrieve many valuable remains of those days, they serve chiefly as hints and suggestions for conforming our imagination closer to reality.

The primary sources of data are also limited. The records of the prophets, their own writings or contemporary writings about them, are fragmentary in nature. When we think of the volumes written by some of our present day religious leaders, and compare them to the few chapters that we have from the prophets, we realize we have precious little. We have little that could be called autobiography or biography of those prophets that made their office immortal. We have at best, sketches of their lives, recorded incidents in which they figured prominently, which often, as in the case of Israel, are related as chronological developments in the history of the nation or religious community.

Added to this fragmentary nature of the records is the additional hindrance that those who recorded, including





the prophets themselves, lacked the scientific knowledge and concepts that we have today. Not having this understanding, or at least, terminology, they could not avail themselves of it in interpreting what they experienced. Furthermore, the prophets had no interest in the psychological description or explanation of their experience.<sup>5</sup> Had they possessed this knowledge and used it in their interpretive recordings, there would have been less need for a study of this kind. There are those today, however, who seem to have this knowledge, and who have experiences similar at least, to those which the prophets described, from whom we may receive help in understanding religious prophecy.<sup>6</sup>

From these limitations it is thus evident that there is the necessity for frequent reconstruction by inference. Every attempt will be made to insure the accuracy of the inference in so far as that is possible. Inferences, however, can never be made synonymous with facts until further evidence transfers them from the status of inference to fact.

Psychical research is approximately seventy-seven years old.<sup>7</sup> Many famous psychologists have aided in this

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5. Holscher, op. cit. pp. 3-5.

6. A good example of which is: E. J. Garrett, Telepathy, in Search of a Lost Faculty (New York: Creative Age Press, Inc., 1941).

7. Beginning with the investigations of Sir Wm. Crooks in 1870. See: Harry Price, Fifty Years of Psychical Research (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1939), p. 26.





research in different countries and various societies and laboratories. No single thesis could successfully do justice either to the history or to the findings of this science. Many of the early experimentations were not performed under scientific conditions, and even today, attempts are continually being made to insure against the possibility of sensory clues. It was therefore necessary to limit this particular study to the more outstanding workers and more prominent experiments in this field. References were centered chiefly on the work reported by the British Society for Psychical Research, the American Society for Psychical Research and the Parapsychological Laboratory at Duke University. Though this appears as a limitation, it is so only in the sense of importance, for little that is deserving of attention in the field of psychic research escapes the publications of these three groups.

Parapsychology is a young science. It is a science which, because it investigates phenomena hitherto considered inexplicable or nonexistent, is not accepted as such universally. Prejudice dies hard, especially when such prejudice is a protective measure for a system of thought upon which a life's work has been based.<sup>8</sup> The prejudice is waning, but it is still strong enough to throw a shadow

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8. J. B. Rhine, "The Source of Difficulties in Parapsychology," Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 10, (September, 1946), p. 167.





over the reliability or importance of the findings of this pioneer research.

Prejudice is not the only factor which limits the authority of parapsychological data. The nature of psychic phenomena themselves is restricting in that it makes scientific investigation difficult. Psychic phenomena usually occur spontaneously. The subject rarely controls their occurrence or their particular manifestation. There are, however, conditions which appear to be favorable for the occurrence of these phenomena. It is these conditions which the subject in the laboratory attempts to meet. Even though he should meet the conditions, however, there is no assurance that an extrasensory experience will occur. These phenomena are consciously controlled only to a slight extent, and in this respect they are largely involuntary.

Investigating phenomena which are largely spontaneous and involuntary in character is a most laborious task. The data are derived through patience and scientific devotion, and are only presentable, scientifically, in statistical form. This subject is treated fully in a later chapter, and these statements serve merely to show the limitations of the field in the data from psychical research.

Though references are made to the mystics of the various religions and to the activities of spiritualist mediums, this is not an exhaustive study in either mysticism





or mediums. References to those subjects are made only as they correspond to some function of prophecy and as their practices are engaged in by the prophets.

### III. INVESTIGATIONS BY OTHERS

Much has been written on psychical research and on the Old Testament prophets. The material is less abundant on the prophets of other religions, and on the use of data of psychical research in an effort to understand the office of the prophet. The literature may be divided into eleven groups: (1) The writings of the prophets or the original sources of the prophet's activities, (2) Literature on prophecy, magic and divination. (3) Literature on the Old Testament and its prophecies. (4) References to the prophets of other religions. (5) Collections of prophecies through the centuries. (6) Literature on the psychology of the prophet and prophecy. (7) Philosophical conjectures of extrasensory perception's application to religion and religious experience. (8) Literature on the psychology of religion. (9) Writings of individual mediums. (10) Literature on psychical research. (11) Literature on the study of the superconscious mind.

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of the subconscious mind.

1. The writings of the prophets and original sources

of the prophet's activities include the sacred writings of the religions of the world, that of major value being the



Old Testament.

2. Literature on psychical research. Of the many works in this field those by Rhine are of special importance. His work, in conjunction with J. G. Pratt and other associates, Extra-Sensory Perception After Sixty Years,<sup>9</sup> was labeled as, "unquestionably the most important book yet published in the field of psychic research and parapsychology, with the doubtful exceptions of one or two of the early classics, which are scarcely comparable," by the Proceedings of the British Society for Psychical Research.<sup>10</sup> His latest book, The Reach of the Mind,<sup>11</sup> was published in 1947. In it he presents the latest in Duke University parapsychological data and applies these data to the problems of philosophy, religion and human relations. The Proceedings of the British Society for Psychical Research, the Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research, and the Journal of Parapsychology from Duke University, are the three major periodicals in the field. The work of Dunne as reported in his book, An Experiment with Time,<sup>12</sup> is an investigation into the prophetic function of dreams, with an attempted

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9. J. B. Rhine, et al., Extra-Sensory Perception After Sixty Years (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1940).

10. Review, Proceedings 46 (Nov. 1940), p. 265.

11. J. B. Rhine, The Reach of the Mind (New York: Wm. Sloane Associates, 1947).

12. J. W. Dunne, An Experiment with Time (New York: The MacMillin Co., 1927).





explanation in the theory of Serialism, treating time as the fourth dimension.

3. Literature on the Old Testament Prophets and Prophecies. This is another voluminous field. J. M. P. Smith<sup>13</sup> has studied the prophet with respect to his own inner feelings, and thus is particularly helpful from the point of view of the psychology of prophecy. This is also true of, The Prophets Tell Their Own Story, by Leslie,<sup>14</sup> which relates the prophet's experiences as coming from his own lips. The emphasis is on the way they felt as they performed their duties. Knudson has two books on the Old Testament prophets,<sup>15</sup> and in both the author manifests ability to see through the prophetic books to the prophets themselves. A valuable work in the psychological interpretation of the prophetic ecstatic experience is, Die Propheten by Hölscher.<sup>16</sup>

4. Literature on prophecy, magic and divination. A more limited field, the exhaustive study of Guillaume being of particular importance in pointing out the differences in the methods of the Hebrew prophets and their

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13. J. M. P. Smith, The Prophets and Their Time (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1935). The Prophet and His Problems (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1914).

14. E. A. Leslie, The Prophet's Tell Their Own Story (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1939).

15. A. C. Knudson, The Beacon Lights of Prophecy (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1914). The Prophetic Movement in Israel (New York: Abingdon Cokesbury Press, 1921).

16. Hölscher, op. cit.,





neighbors.<sup>17</sup>

5. Literature on the psychology of religion. James' analysis of mysticism was apropos to this study,<sup>18</sup> and also the similar work of Leuba.<sup>19</sup> Hickman has a chapter on the psychology of inspiration in his book, Introduction to the Psychology of Religion.<sup>20</sup>

6. References to the prophets of other religions. Of particular value in this field was The Encyclopedia of Religion edited by Ferm, whose concise thoroughness is of great value.

7. Writings of individual mediums. These are works of an autobiographical and introspective nature, or of a biographical and analytic nature. The biography of the trance prophet, Edgar Cayce,<sup>21</sup> provides parallels to some of the experiences of the prophets.

8. Collections of prophecies through the centuries. These are books which chronologically relate the history of prophecy, both religious and secular, among the nations of the world. Forman's work, The Story of Prophecy,<sup>22</sup> is an

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17. A. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1938).

18. W. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1902).

19. J. H. Leuba, The Psychology of Religious Mysticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1925).

20. F. S. Hickman, Introduction to the Psychology of Religion (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1926).

21. Thos. Sugrue, There Is a River (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1942).

22. H. J. Forman, The Story of Prophecy (New York: Farrar & Rhinehart, 1936).

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17. A. G. Williams, Prophecy and Divination (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1938).
18. W. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1902).
19. J. H. Leuba, The Psychology of Religion (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1925).
20. F. S. Hickman, Introduction to the Psychology of Religion (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1928).
21. Thos. Edgar, There is a River (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1942).
22. M. J. Forman, The Story of Prophecy (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1936).



example of this group, as it traces prophecy from the ancient Greek oracles to the Theosophy prophets of today. The prophecies are simply related, not evaluated, and there is no attempt to analyze the prophet.

9. Philosophical conjectures of extrasensory perception's application to religion and religious experience. Of the books written before 1920 in this specific area is Franklin Johnson's The New Psychic Studies in Their Relation to Christian Thought,<sup>23</sup> which reviews the work of the British Society for Psychical Research, and relates it to the Christian doctrines of prayer, immortality and revelation. Since 1920 there is the study, The Church and Psychical Research by G. E. Wright.<sup>24</sup>

10. Literature on the psychology of the prophet and prophecy. In this group is a Ph.D. thesis, written in 1908, The Psychology of Prophecy, by J. H. Kaplan.<sup>25</sup> The author, in a very scholarly way, analyzes the prophets of Israel, their prophecies, their personalities, and their means of prophecying. Approaching the subject from a naturalistic point of view, his purpose is to explain the prophet's experiences by the principles of known science, and he does

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23. Franklin Johnson, The New Psychic Studies in Their Relation to Christian Thought (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1887).

24. George E. Wright, The Church and Psychical Research; A Layman's View. (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, 1920).

25. Kaplan, op. cit.





so without any reference to the science of psychical research--presumably because of the early date of writing.

Povah's book, The New Psychology and the Hebrew Prophets,<sup>26</sup> published in 1925, is as the title says, an analysis of the Hebrew prophets and their prophecy in the light of the principles of psychoanalysis. Hamilton has written a study of the prophets from the point of view of a psychologist.<sup>27</sup> Her analyses concern their messages as indicative of their personalities. Here as in the above work, the psychological analysis is devoid of any reference to the data of parapsychology. The Prophets, Their Personalities and Teachings,<sup>28</sup> by Cohon, is confined for the most part to the Hebrew Prophets and to their teachings.

Rhine's interest in precognition experiments has led him to write several articles and editorials on this subject or in reference to it in The Journal of Parapsychology.

These are the works that deal more or less exclusively with the psychology of religious prophecy. Scattered references to the subject, especially in the literature on the Old Testament, are quite numerous; yet even these

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26. J. W. Povah, The New Psychology and the Hebrew Prophets (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1925).

27. Edith Hamilton, The Prophets of Israel (New York: W. W. Norton Co., 1925).

28. B. D. Cohon, The Prophets, Their Personalities and Teachings (New York: Chas Scribner's Sons, 1939).





scattered references are for the most part void of any reference to parapsychology.

11. Literature on the study of the superconscious mind. While many of the books mentioned in the other groups refer to the superconscious, their emphasis warranted their placement in another group. The work of Heard fits almost exclusively into this group, his entire emphasis being on the evolution of the human mind or consciousness.<sup>29</sup>

The recently published (1946) Hindu Psychology<sup>30</sup> by the Boston Vedanta leader, Swami Akhilananda, is a contrast to the other works in the field, being based on the Vedanta religious beliefs which accept the reality of extrasensory perception. The experiences of the Indian Swami are explained by the assumption of a superconscious state of the mind in which one's perception is ultimately extrasensory.

#### IV. METHODS OF PROCEDURE

It is the purpose of this study to discover the psychological explanation of the phenomenon of religious prophecy. The procedure moves in two directions, to historical research in religious prophecy on the one hand, and to parapsychological research into extrasensory perceptions

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29. Gerald Heard, The Ascent of Humanity (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1929).

30. Akhilananda, op. cit.





on the other. These two procedures are then synthesized, together with other psychological principles, in a psychological analysis of the prophet to understand his methods and his office.

In the historical research the primary sources of data are the writings of the prophets and the original records of the activities of the prophets. This requires an exhaustive study of the Old and New Testaments, with detailed investigations into their original languages. The history of Israel is the history of the great prophets, and the writings of other prophets were less revealing in comparison.

The secondary sources of data were the many works written in exposition of the primary sources of data. By far the majority of these were on the Hebrew prophets, interpreting their message and exploring their methods. These secondary sources throw much light on the culture of the prophets' times, an understanding of which is absolutely necessary for a study of this nature. Outstanding scholars of the Christian Church have written in this field, and their works form a cumulative supply of knowledge from which this study has greatly profited.

In the parapsychological research into extrasensory perceptions, it was necessary chronologically to study the experiments through the years, the work of the British





Society, of the American Society, the many independent and lay investigators who have published their reports, and finally the monumental work at Duke University. To gain this perspective it was necessary to cover the periodicals devoted to this research and the books that have been published at a steady, though never prolific, rate since the founding of the British Society in 1882. Parapsychology is a science which is developing by the month, and one is not up to date, even on primary data, unless one has covered the latest publications.

A secondary method of procedure in this direction has been that of personal experimentation. This work has been done with the material used in the Parapsychological Laboratory at Duke University. The purpose has been to test for my own satisfaction, the possibility of clairvoyant, telepathic, precognitive, postcognitive and psycho-kinetic faculties in the human mind. These experiments have been performed over a period of a year and a half with various individuals and groups.

In preparation for this thesis I have visited the Parapsychological Laboratory at Duke University and interviewed Rhine and his associates on this subject. I have also visited the Association of Research and Enlightenment at Virginia Beach, Virginia, an association for the preservation of the records of the trance medium, Edgar Cayce, and





have had several interviews with those who worked with Cayce and experienced his prophetic abilities. Also included in the interviews have been those with people who claim to have had psychical experiences of an extrasensory nature--not professional or spiritualist mediums, but those who have been aware at times of their possession of what appeared to them as psychical abilities.

The synthetic step in this procedure will be a detailed study of the prophets and their activities from the viewpoint of parapsychology. Taking the data derived from the historical research and that obtained from the parapsychological research, it is the aim of this third step to bring the two together, as the one illuminates the other.

That which results from this synthesis will then be correlated with other known data and related phenomena in the hope of gaining a working hypothesis with which to integrate conclusions with the science of modern psychology as a whole, and to formulate a procedure for cultivating the prophetic spirit.

## V. SYNOPSIS

The prophet's origin in the cultures of the past illumines many of the characteristics he assumed in his later development. Magical incantations and the many modes of primitive divination all make a contribution to the





development of religious prophecy. From them we can trace the direction of the evolution of the prophet.

The nature of the prophet was particularly fitted for his office. His gifts which developed through his cultural encouragement distinguished him from the ordinary religious individual. The personality of the prophet, though widely divergent in many ways among the representatives of the office, had specific qualities which stimulated the prophetic function. They made possible his visions, dreams and ecstasy, and facilitated his acute awareness of the presence of God. The prophet's keen intelligence and stable personality were the basis of his religious genius and spiritual psychology. His interpretive knowledge of history and of social relationships and his understanding of human nature were important tools in his prophetic function.

The need for the prophet among the peoples of the world brought the prophetic office into existence. The function of the prophet, though manifested in various ways, was essentially that of spokesman for the deity. He was mediator between man and God, and felt himself identified with the cause of his God. He received his messages par-  
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The spontaneity of his inspiration distinguished him from the priest and the sage. The extrasensory character of his revelations form the basis for the later applications of parapsychological data to the prophetic function. The prophet's belief in a moral law which reached its highest development in the Hebrew prophet, was the central principle in his spiritual truths. The Hebrew prophet occupies a unique place in the history of religious prophecy.

The diminishing prejudice against psychical phenomena in scientific circles has encouraged the progress of psychical research. The important data from the research of the British Society for Psychical Research, the American Society for Psychical Research and the Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University have established a science. These findings indicate laws which the phenomena of extrasensory perception appears to follow.

These laws for parapsychological activity are strikingly similar to the working conditions assumed by the prophet. These laws are also obeyed by others who claim extrasensory powers, such as spiritualist mediums and mystics. A study of the psychical phenomena spontaneously experienced by the peoples of the world shows conditions similar both to those of prophecy and psychical research. The prophet's attitude toward his office, his nature, his working atmosphere are all conducive to the occurrence of extrasensory





perception. Many of the experiences of the prophets are examples of extrasensory powers acting in their various modes of clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition and post-cognition. The extrasensory perception explanation is the most logical one in interpreting these prophetic experiences and his major means of receiving revelation, namely, the vision.

The psychical activities of the prophet are dissimilar to activities usually associated with the subconscious mind. As the paranormal experiences of writers, scientists, philosophers and mystics, they enter from a superconscious dimension of the mind. The superconscious activities enter the mind when the conscious mind is passive and the subconscious mind, suppressed. Developing the prophetic spirit consists in practicing this state of dissociation which encourages superconscious experience. This is done through meditation upon symbols or thoughts of religious significance. The highest form of superconscious experience is not that of extrasensory perception as tested by psychical research, but rather, the experiencing of the cosmic consciousness with which the individual consciousness unites.





## CHAPTER II

### THE ORIGIN OF THE PROPHET

J. M. P. Smith has contended that any study of prophecy must include a study of history.<sup>1</sup> The office of the prophet was closely associated with the national and cultural life of the peoples of antiquity. In the majority of these cultures the office was a theocratic institution, which reveals not only the nature of many of these ancient civilizations, but also the reason for the cultural importance of religious prophecy.<sup>2</sup> A historic study of religious prophecy should begin with an investigation of its origin, its earliest appearances and the locations and significance of these appearances. This chapter is an attempt at such an investigation, and will consist of a philological treatment of the early words for prophet, a description of its emergence in the various ancient civilizations, of primitive magic and divination, of the prophetic experience of possession, and an interpretation of evolutionary trends in the ancient prophetic office.

The modes of expression which characterize religious prophecy have their appearance in almost every civilization of which there is any record. Prophetic activity was

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1. Smith, The Prophet and His Problems, p. 163.

2. John Skinner, Prophecy and Religion (Cambridge: University Press, 1922), p. 215.





particularly prevalent in the ancient Semitic world.

Guillaume believes prophecy to have been a native rather than a borrowed product in each of the Semitic cultures.<sup>3</sup>

The ecstatic element in prophecy, as will be shown later in this chapter, is its foundational characteristic, and it is the abundant presence of this element in Semitic prophecy, together with the antiquity and the prophetic emphasis of that culture, that has led some investigators to regard it as the original home of prophetic utterance. One scholar believes Arabia to be the home of the prophet, as "ecstatic elements savor of the desert,"<sup>4</sup> and another believes the Hittites to have been the "originators of ecstasy."<sup>5</sup> The Babylonians regarded Enmendurannu, a legendary Sumerian king who reigned before the flood, as the founder of divination. He is believed to be the Enoch mentioned in the book of Genesis. Others disagree with the Semetic origin of prophecy, some favoring Thrace as the original home of prophecy.<sup>6</sup>

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3. Guillaume, op. cit. p. 33.

4. C. H. Cornill, The Prophets of Israel, (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1904), p. 11.

5. T. H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel (London: Duckworth, 1923), p. 34.

6. Written criticism of the second reader, R. H. Pfeiffer, on the first draft of the dissertation.





## PHILOLOGY

The Hebrew word for prophet is נָבִי (nabhi).

Authorities do not agree on its original meaning. The disagreement concerns the element of ecstasy. Rowley states that the verb נָבַח, to prophesy, is a denominative from נָבִי, meaning, "to play the nabhi,"<sup>7</sup> and that the original root is not found in the Old Testament. He believes that spokespersonship, not ecstasy, is involved. Gesenius and Kuenen are of the opinion that the original root is a weakened form of נָבַח, meaning, to bubble up or pour forth, and meant, "a flow of words under excitement of inspiration."<sup>8</sup> Kaplan shares this opinion. He identifies the Hebrew nabhi with similar words in the Arabian, Babylonian, Assyrian and Caananitish languages, and believes that all of these cultures have contributed to the completed meaning of nabhi, and that the original idea of the word is a "bubbling over with frenzied emotion."<sup>9</sup>

Based on Gesenius' investigation, the lexicon states that נָבִי in its oldest forms meant "to speak in religious ecstasy," and that later usage made it essentially religious

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7. H. H. Rowley, "The Nature Of Prophecy In the Light Of Recent Study," Harvard Theological Review 38 (1945), p.7.

8. Wilhelm Gesenius (Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, C. A. Briggs, editors), A Hebrew and English Lexicon Of the Old Testament (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1907), p. 611.

9. Kaplan, Psychology of Prophecy, p. 8.





instructing and predicting.<sup>10</sup> Though nothing dogmatic can be said, I believe in its original meaning נָבִי meant primarily spokespersonship, but that religious ecstasy was also included, though secondarily. I base this both on the close association of the root נָבִי with נָבִי, and the early cultural association of prophecy with ecstasy.

When in the book of Exodus, Aaron is described as a prophet for Moses,<sup>11</sup> the thought expressed is one speaking for another. Aaron vocally expressed the message of Moses to Pharaoh. This meaning of the term is identical with that of the Greek word for prophet, προφήτης, which means literally, "to speak for." Combining all these variant and legitimate conceptions into a single definition, the nabhi is one who officially speaks for the deity. The qualifying word "officially" is necessary because the nabhi was viewed as one especially chosen and particularly gifted for his "spokemanship."

Another Hebrew word, closely associated with nabhi, is נָבִי or roway. It also is derived from a verb, the word, נָבִי, to see. The roway is one who sees, or, a seer. Other forms from the same root give additional information on the meaning of seer. A variant meaning of the

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10. Gesenius, op. cit., p. 612.

11. Exodus 7: 1,2.





same word, roway, is "vision," and a participle, roway, having become an independent noun, is translated, "vision conveying revelation." The roway therefore, is one who sees ultra-sensorially, one who has access to information above those who "see" in the normal way.<sup>12</sup>

The words, roway and nabhi, are used interchangeably in the earlier sections of the Old Testament. Samuel is called both a prophet and a seer, and Gad is described as "the prophet Gad, David's Seer."<sup>13</sup> An antiquarian note in I Samuel is as follows: "Before time in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come and let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer."<sup>14</sup> From this it would seem that seer was the earlier term for prophet. Hölscher identifies both the seer and the prophet as those distinguished in perceiving things not common to every day experience.<sup>15</sup> Aalders believes both terms synonymous, while Rowley believes that the functions had certain distinctions but later age failed to differentiate them by name.<sup>16</sup> T. H. Robinson believes the seer and the prophet were originally quite different in function. This contention identifies ecstasy

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12. Gesenius, op. cit., pp. 906-909.

13. II Sam. 24: 11.

14. I Sam. 9: 9.

15. Hölscher, op. cit., p. 3.

16. Rowley, op. cit., pp. 7-8.





with the prophet and its absence with the seer. The seer subsequently disappeared and the function was assumed by the nabhi.<sup>17</sup>

I do not believe such a contrast existed. There is no evidence that the seer did not avail himself of ecstasy. His frequent association with musical instruments could indicate that he used those instruments to produce an ecstatic condition.<sup>18</sup> Samuel, regarded by scholars as the first prophet in the full sense of the term in Israel, was classed as a seer by his contemporaries, and yet was the leader of a band of ecstatic prophets.<sup>19</sup> It is my contention that seer was the earlier term, denoting primarily one gifted with extrasensory perception, and that nabhi was a later development, based upon growing religious conceptions. Seer described what the subject did; nabhi described for whom he did it. Seer was the original term; then came a period when both seer and nabhi were used interchangeably, though the former definitions still partially prevailed, and finally only nabhi survived. More important than the identification or contrast of seer and nabhi to this study, is the extrasensory abilities that the word seer conveys in reference to religious prophecy.

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17. Robinson, op. cit., p. 35.

18. I. Chr. 25: 1,5.

19. I Sam. 20:20.

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17. Robinson, op. cit., p. 33.  
18. I. Chr. 23:1, 2.  
19. I Sam. 20:20.



## II. THE EMERGENCE OF THE PROPHET IN THE VARIOUS CULTURES

Paranormal abilities accompany religious prophecy in whatever culture prophecy is studied. These faculties were accepted as supernatural in origin,<sup>20</sup> and those who possessed them were believed in the employ of the divine spirit or spirits.

That which the prophet paranormally experienced was interpreted in terms of the beliefs of his particular civilization. "To each man the impression comes clothed in a form for which his own beliefs have prepared him."<sup>21</sup> Should the culture be polytheistic, the automatism experienced is interpreted as one of the gods; should it be characterized by belief in demons, the experience may be credited to the influence of demons; should it be one of ethical monotheism, the interpretation is seen as the revelation of the one and only righteous God.

Whatever the culture and whatever the belief, the prophet was respected as one in touch with supernatural powers, and was granted a privileged freedom.<sup>22</sup> When he spoke, people listened. Theirs was freedom of speech and

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20. Lucien Levy-Bruhl, Primitives and the Supernatural (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1935), p. 59-64.

21. Edith Lyttleton, Our Superconscious Mind (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1931), p. 206.

22. Smith, The Prophets and Their Times, p. 96.





freedom of action,<sup>23</sup> and though their speech was undesirable and their action revolting, they never lacked an audience. Theirs was a supernatural capacity, and he who harmed a prophet was in danger of punishment from the prophet's god.

The pre-Semitic population of the Euphrates valley, the Sumerian civilization, produced the baru. The meaning of the word is "to see," and thus is identical with the Hebrew seer. These baru diviners were associated with cultic centers as were the diviners of the succeeding Accadian, Assyrian and Babylonian civilizations. They followed rigid systems of ritual in preparation for their divinations. They lacked the spontaneity and the vivid consciousness of the presence of the deity that characterized the Hebrew prophet. Theirs was a temple office; they were professional diviners, receiving their income from the temple revenues.<sup>24</sup>

The Hebrew prophet, though he was occasionally also a priest,<sup>25</sup> was never identified with the priestly class. He maintained this distinction much more than other Semitic prophets. The emergence of the Hebrew prophet was due in part to the need he felt to protest against the priestly

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23. Though Jeremiah and Micaiah were imprisoned, that for which they were imprisoned was considered treason, and would have meant death to the ordinary man.

24. S. H. Hooke, Prophets and Priests (London: Thos. Murley and Co., 1938), p. 13.

25. Jere. 1:1; Ezek. 1:3.





class and their temple worship. This subject will be fully discussed in a later chapter.

Religion in ancient Egypt was closely associated with magic. Egypt's antiquity is especially well documented, and from these sources, scholars are led to believe that magic was the foundation of Egyptian religion. He who approximated the prophet in this ancient land was also a priest. Performing his office by means of his magical formulae, he can be classed as a priest-magician. The term magician is often used by the ancients in reference to their diviners, and is not to be confused with the modern usage of the term. The antiquarian magician was not a sleight of hand artist; he was one in league with supernatural powers and in possession of supernatural knowledge.<sup>26</sup>

Though somewhat rigid for a study of the psychology of religious prophecy, the prophecy of the pyramids is not without its interest. Believed by pyramidologists to have been designed by experts who were not only scientists, but also prophets, the pyramids are considered prophecy in architecture. The pyramidologist labors to find the code and interpret the message of those ancient prophets in stone. The key to the prophetic code, they believe is one of distance, so much space being the equivalent of so much

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26. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 239.





time.<sup>27</sup>

Greek culture produced the oracular shrines. The oracle of Apollo at Delphi was the most famous, while that at Dodona, the most ancient. These Greek shrines were well known as far as Greek culture penetrated. The oracular message came through an ecstatic medium--a woman called Pythia at Delphi. He who was called the prophet in these shrines was the priest of the shrine who transmitted the message of the ecstatic to the people. The prophet "spoke for" the mediator, that is, he mediated for the one who spoke for the god.<sup>28</sup> The situation is similar to that of Aaron's mediation for Moses. Of this shrine Cicero said, "Never, never, could the oracle of Delphi have been so overwhelmed with significant presents from all kings and nations, had not all the ages proven the truth of its oracles."<sup>29</sup>

Many interesting stories have been preserved concerning these shrines. The one in which King Croesus appears reveals the ambiguity of these oracles, and makes possible a later comparison of them with the oracles of other cultures. Croesus consulted the Delphi oracle concerning his proposed battle with Persia. The oracular

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27. H. J. Forman, The Story of Prophecy (New York: Farrar & Rhinehart Inc., 1936. p. 56.

28. F. C. Eiselen, Prophecy and the Prophets (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1909), p. 21.

29. Forman, op. cit., p. 22.





reply was that if he went to battle, a great nation would fall. Taking this to mean the fall of Persia, he went to battle, only to be disastrously defeated. The empire that fell was his own.

Greece also had its independent diviners, who prognosticated by means of omens with little attention to the gods or religion. These are described in the Homeric writings.

The sibyl is a prominent figure in Greek and to a lesser extent, Roman culture, and the sibylline oracles were considered tremendously important as messages from the gods. The sibyl was an elderly woman, possessed by some god, who consequently became the mouthpiece of that god. These sibylline oracles were written, and were often consulted by Roman magistrates of the old Roman Republic for guidance.<sup>30</sup>

Roman culture, as found in Italy, was lacking in the emotional ecstatic types of religious divination, with the exception of the sibyl and the oracular shrines of Greek influence. Due either to the character of their gods or the personalities of the people or both, there is very little of the prophet in ancient Italy. The spiritual need for mediation was apparently met in the majority of

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<sup>30</sup>. F. L. Parrish, "Sibylline Oracles" Ferm, editor, Encyclopedia of Religion, p. 710.





instances by the rather colorless method of sortilege. The sors was something like the lot, a rod or plate bearing an inscription, and the drawing of sortes was as the casting of lots. The principle of Roman divination was similar to that of flipping a coin. The Roman gods delivered no oracles; they simply passed their approval or disapproval on proposed actions.<sup>31</sup>

A contrast to the religious prophecy of Rome was that of ancient India. He who resembled the prophet in that oriental land was the rishi, an inspired seer, sage and poet. There were both priest rishis and deva or divine rishis, the latter believed more spontaneously possessed by the deity. These rishis were the writers of the Vedas, the sacred scriptures of Hinduism, believed to be the literal word of God.

Another who has exerted a strong influence in Hinduism is the inspired teacher. He is known by many names, depending upon the age in which he lived and the particular branch of Hinduism in which he taught. These include, mahatma--not to be confused with the Theosophist's mahatma--sidka, samadka, yogi and guru. These teachers communicate the divine will, which they receive through mystical capacities, developed through concentration. These

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31. G. Wissowa, "Divination (Roman)" Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), Vol. IV p. 820.





mystical practices are known as yogas. The prophetic ecstasy of ancient India differs from the frenzied prophetic ecstasy of Semitic antiquity. This contrast will be fully investigated in the next chapter.

Native American culture had its medicine man. As diviners of other civilizations, the medicine man also had his levels of character. In some tribes he was a mere shaman, that is, a crude ecstatic, who entered into a trance like state in which he claimed powers of divination. In other and more civilized tribes the medicine man was a religious prophet in its fuller meaning, that is, he was also a spiritual mediator of God to man. The white man and his practices were attractive objects for the prophetic curses of these medicine men.<sup>32</sup>

Andrew Lang, noted specialist in the field of primitive religions as well as of psychic research, reports that the Maori civilization of New Zealand had a form of prophetic activity similar to the Greek oracular shrine at Delphos.<sup>33</sup>

The same source states that the cultures of the northland, that of the Lapps and Eskimos, have pronounced powers of an extrasensory nature, and that the Lapps actually had an educational system in the black arts. This

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32. A. E. Hayden, "Medicine Man," *Ferm*, op. cit., p. 478.

33. Andrew Lang, Cock Lane and Common Sense (London: Longmans, Green and Co.,) 1894, p. 43.





would appear to be another type of prophecy, mediation with the devil or demons.

### MAGIC

The primitive forerunner of religious prophecy is magic. Magic seeks by its incantations to control the powers of the supernatural. Based on primitive animism, it is an anthropomorphic interpretation of nature.<sup>34</sup> Viewing all things as inhabited by spirits, the priest-magician's art consisted in controlling those spirits for desired ends.

The omnipotence of the word, of which more will be said in the next section, is the foundation of magical arts. The belief that words have a power in themselves when spoken is still with us. By applying this belief to his animistic interpretation of nature, the magician sought to control the forces of the universe by words--spoken at the appropriate time, in a special manner, by a qualified person, and when necessary, with symbolic material objects.

The word of greatest power was a name, and identification of an object with the name of an individual is known as sympathetic magic. At the astrologically appointed time the priest-magician would take an amulet which he had made, identify it with some individual's name, and symbolically

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34. Rupert Gleadow, Magic and Divination (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1941), pp. 17-18.

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<sup>34</sup> Rupert Gleadow, *Magic and Divination* (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1941), pp. 17-18.



do something to that amulet, such as heal it of a disease, and this rite supposedly carried the power to cause such an effect in that individual. That the powers of suggestion and of the human will were potent factors in the effects of these magical incantations among primitive peoples is obvious.<sup>35</sup>

With this background the study of magic can be simplified by a division. There are magical incantations which are composed only of the magician's words. There are other incantations which include beside the words of the magician, material objects of particular significance to the magical rite. These objects, besides their use in sympathetic magic, were also worn as "good luck pieces," having been charmed by the magician's ritual. Magical rites using words alone are known as spells. When either of these types of magic is used for helpful purposes, it is known as white magic; when used for harmful purposes, it is known as sorcery or black magic. The black magic practitioner is known as a witch, if a woman, a wizard, if a man. Often however, the witch and wizard are so branded primarily because of their unofficial capacity as contrasted with that of the properly invested priest-magician.<sup>36</sup>

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35. Ibid., pp. 25-30.

36. Andrew Lang, Magic and Religion (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1901), p. 47.





Egypt is considered the home of magic. There it flourished in conjunction with the Egyptian religious cultus. Gleadow believes that the origin of magic was the attempt of the medicine man to influence the rain god by means of a ritual, designed also to convince himself and his audience that he was capable of so doing.<sup>37</sup>

The relationship of magic and religion is a controversial subject. Points of view vary from magic as the foundation of religion, or religion as disguised magic, to magic and religion as diametrically diverse in character. While it is probably true that in certain countries such as Egypt, magic seemed to precede religion, I believe it is also true to say that in other cultures, both religion and magic were independent offshoots from a common awareness of the supernatural, and that it is not likely that either preceded the other, but that the prophet availed himself of both, depending on the mores of his culture. The differences between magic and religion are not so radical as may appear. To purge contemporary religious beliefs of civilized peoples of all magical conceptions, would certainly alter them. In their purified state magic is selfish in character, while religion is unselfish.<sup>38</sup> Magic seeks its own will regardless

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37. Gleadow, op. cit., p. 22.

38. Knudson, The Prophetic Movement in Israel, p. 103.





of the will of the deity, whereas religion seeks its own will only as it conforms to that of the deity. Magic constrains; religion prays. According to Gleadow however, magic and religion are entirely intermingled in ritual, in which methods similar to magic are employed to get the desired results from deities of "human mentalities."<sup>39</sup> The validity of this assertion, it would seem, depends on the particular ritual in question.

Regardless of the similarities of magic and religion, their dissimilarities gave birth to one of the earliest of religious conflicts. So long as religion was intermingled with magic it was anchored in superstition and could scarcely progress without discarding this hindrance. The conflict raged in Babylonia and Assyria and especially in Israel, where religion's success in abandoning magic was the most successful.<sup>40</sup> There are many injunctions against wizards, witches and enchanterers in the Old Testament of which the following is an example.

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits or a wizard or a necromancer.<sup>41</sup>

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39. Gleadow, op. cit., p. 20.

40. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 243.

41. Deut. 18: 9-12.





Though much is implied in this list of anathemas, magic is the basic objection. While it may be contended by some<sup>42</sup> that only the unofficial practitioner of magic was taboo, it is the belief of others, including myself, that the ban was against magic itself, and was indicative of the great conflict between magic and religion.<sup>43</sup>

### DIVINATION

Though the primitive diviner and the great prophet may appear to have little in common, they both acted as specially qualified mediators, through whom the deity or deities, spirit or spirits, communicated messages to the people. Divination of course, is a more primitive form of this mediation. Understanding the function of the diviner and the office of divination helps in many ways to understand the development of the prophet. Viewed in this light divination can be defined as a forerunner of religious prophecy. The soothsayer is the most common term for the diviner, and hence was in certain aspects the predecessor of the prophet.

Special days were frequently set aside as days for divination, the choice of which days was based primarily on the astrologer's decrees. When the Shunammite's son lay

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<sup>42</sup>. Lang, loc. cit.

<sup>43</sup>. Guillaume, loc. cit.

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Special days were frequently set aside as days for divination, the choice of which days was based primarily on the astrologer's decrees. When the Shannamite's son lay

<sup>42</sup> Lang, loc. cit.  
<sup>43</sup> Guillaume, loc. cit.



dead and she prepared to seek the supernatural aid of Elisha the prophet, her husband said, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him today? It is neither new moon, nor sabbath."<sup>44</sup>

There are many types of divination, ranging from the most primitive to those incorporated in the methods of the prophets. These modes of divination overlap, and are frequently used in combination. Cicero divided divination into two groups, that by the use of the omen, and that by the use of purely mental activity.<sup>45</sup> That this division is an oversimplification is seen from the following description of the major means of divining.

a. Dreams. Dreams universally have been believed to be conveyers of information otherwise unknowable. To most people dreams were an enigma, but to the skilled diviner, they were productive of omens, predictions of the dreamer's future. The soothsayer believed the deity revealed information through dreams in symbols or omens.

b. Presentiments. Premonitions, inexplicable feelings that something has or will happen, are a means of divination still in use among civilized peoples--usually allied with the feminine sex--and, as with all methods of divination, are believed to be supernatural in origin.

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44. II Kings 4:23.

45. Edward Koenig, "Prophecy," Hastings, editor, op. cit., Vol. 10, p. 384.

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42. II Kings 4:23.  
 43. Edward Koeber, "Prophecy," Hastings, editor,  
 ed. 1911, Vol. 10, p. 234.



c. Ordeal. The ordeal differs from other procedures in divining, in that it subjects the "victim" to severe and drastic treatment. He may have to put hot coals in his mouth, or subject himself to similar torture, and his injury or immunity are the omens of divination.

d. Necromancy. The familiar custom of consulting discarnate spirits of deceased individuals through a spiritist medium, has an ancient history. Though this mode of divination was banned in Israel, King Saul availed himself of it when he consulted the witch of Endor to contact the deceased Samuel.<sup>46</sup> The Old Testament describes the seance medium as "one with a familiar spirit."<sup>47</sup> The Hebrew word is וִיחַ, meaning divination by inquiry of the spirit of one deceased.

e. Augury. That which particularizes augury is its use of the omen. This search for the omen was frequently preceded by ritual, which the augur had received from his divining forebears, or had worked out himself. The nature of the omen is of the widest divergence. That of hepatoscopy was developed by the Babylonians, Hittites and Etruscans, who believed the seat of life to be in the liver. The priest diviner put the question for which an answer was desired, to his god, then sacrificed a sheep and examined

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46. I Sam. 28:7.

47. Loc. cit.

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<sup>46</sup> I Sam. 28:7.  
<sup>47</sup> Lev. 19:31.



the sheep's liver for the interpretive markings which constituted the omen. Omens were also sought in the activities of animals, such as the flight of birds, and in human bodily actions, such as sneezing. The Bedouin drew his omens from the first thing he saw after his ritual was finished.<sup>48</sup>

The fatal word and the acted sign are specialized forms of omens. The power of the spoken word--deeply rooted in magic, divination and religion--is known as *cleidomancy*. Civilized people have retained this belief in the power in words by their feeling that the mere saying of certain words had something to do with an event in the future. The acted sign is similar to the spoken word, except of course, the thought of the words is dramatized. There are many examples of the acted sign in the Old and New Testaments. When King Saul sought to prevent the prophet Samuel's leaving him, he grasped his mantle and accidentally rent it. Perceiving the omen Samuel immediately prophesied: "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day."<sup>49</sup>

f. Possession. This mode of divination is of such importance that a special section will be devoted to it. Possession is a seizure of the prophet by a divine spirit so that the prophet's personality recedes to the background,

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48. Guillaume, op. cit., pp. 132-3.

49. I Sam. 28:17.





and he becomes the involuntary instrument of the spirit.

g. Lot. The principle of divining by lot is a seemingly chance situation in which the deity is believed to intervene in a selective manner. The Roman use of sortilege has been described. The Hebrew urim and thummim, objects attached to the breast plate of the high priest and used by him for purposes of discerning Yahweh's will on nationally important issues, seem to have been a type of lot.<sup>50</sup> Casting lots--the drawing of marked objects in a set--was a common means of divination among the ancients and even in the New Testament period. When a disciple was to be selected to replace the fallen Judas, the decision between two candidates was obtained by casting lots, a selection believed to have been determined by divine control in the selection of the lot.<sup>51</sup>

h. Crystal gazing. Crystal gazing relaxes the attention of the conscious mind, allowing other influences to enter. The crystal in itself serves as a hypnotic agent. In their priestly and prophetic divinations the various cultures used different modes of this principle. Egyptians gazed into a drop of ink, Greeks into mirrors, American Indians into a bowl and New Zealanders into a drop of blood.<sup>52</sup>

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50. Carl von Orelli, "Prophecy," Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (S. M. Jackson, editor; New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1911), Vol. 9, p. 272.

51. Acts I: 23-26.

52. Lang, Cock Lane and Common Sense, p. 200.

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50. Carl von Groll, "Prophecy," Encyclopedia of Religion and Society (S. M. Jackson, editor;  
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 51. Lot: 22-23.  
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The divining cup used by Joseph is believed to have been employed in this manner.<sup>53</sup>

i. Astrology. Though simply divination through celestial omens, astrology was and continues to be influential to the extent of meriting special treatment. It has neither been discarded nor redressed by civilization's advance. The horoscope is still meaningful to many cultured Americans, and Theosophy is dependent upon this prophecy of the stars for its doctrines. The strong influence that astrology has had in the world is shown in the fact that the great astronomers, Brahe and Kepler, were also astrologists.<sup>54</sup>

It is of interest here to note that Chinese divination, called shu shu, includes astrology. Other means employed in shu shu are fortune telling by stalks of a certain herb called the divination plant and by tortoise shells.<sup>55</sup>

Though divination was practiced in Israel, its crude forms were forbidden early in its history, and the greater prophets transcended divination, as they determined the divine will through a conscious and personal communion with Yahweh. "Spiritual prophecy" supplanted divination in the religious life of Israel.<sup>56</sup>

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53. Gen. 44:5.

54. Forman, op. cit., pp. 123-126.

55. Wing Tsit Chan, "Chinese Religion," Form, op. cit., p. 153.

56. Skinner, op. cit., p. 5.

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# 1. Astrology. Though simply divination through

celestial omens, astrology was and continues to be influential to the extent of meriting special treatment. It has neither been discarded nor rebuffed by civilization's advance. The horoscope is still meaningful to many untold Americans, and Theosophy is dependent upon this prophecy of the stars for its doctrines. The strong influence that astrology has had in the world is shown in the fact that the great astronomers, Ptolemy and Kepler, were also astrologists.<sup>54</sup>

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## POSSESSION

According to Pfeiffer the earliest record of a prophetic oracle was at Byblos in Phoenicia. The prophet who delivered this oracle was described as being in a state of frenzy, having been seized by a god.<sup>57</sup> The idea of a supernatural seizure in which the personality of the one seized is subdued, is the most primitive and mechanistic description of prophetic inspiration. The prophet's seizure results in contortions of his physical body and confused and disordered vocal utterances. The ancient shaman, originating among the Tunguese people, was typical of this form of possessed mediator, as are the jinn possessed Mohammedan ecstatics. The jinn in Mohammedan circles is a spirit lower than an angel.

The possession of the prophet is not always this crude form of external seizure. It was frequently manifested among the prophets of Israel by internal feelings of compulsion to prophesy. Leslie has Jeremiah confess, "I feel impelled to share what God caused me to see and hear."<sup>58</sup> "The Lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?"<sup>59</sup> The prophet frequently

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57. R. H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Bros., 1941), p. 32.

58. E. A. Leslie, The Prophets Tell Their Own Story (New York: The Abington Press, 1939), p. 226. (*Italics, my own.*)

59. Amos 3:8.

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felt wholly unable to resist the impulses commanding him to function as Yahweh's spokesman. This compulsive feeling is a refinement of the original condition of possession. Ibn Khaldun, the medieval Mohammedan scholar, describes those possessed by this primitive possession as the prey of wondering spirits which moved in on their victim and completely controlled his personality.<sup>60</sup>

The modern medium, Eileen J. Garrett, depicts the psychic abilities which she possesses in language resembling that of possession. Terming her talent an "intrusion of a supersensitive faculty into my normal life," she attributes this intrusion as causing "bewilderment and suffering."<sup>61</sup> It would seem that intrusion and possession have much in common, and that the former may be but the civilized interpretation or manifestation of the latter.

#### EVOLUTION OF THE PROPHET

In the preceding sections an evolutionary process was evidenced in the various modes of divination in their development into what Skinner called "spiritual prophecy."<sup>62</sup> Knudson compares divination's precedence to prophecy to that of alchemy to chemistry and astrology to astronomy.<sup>63</sup>

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60. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination, p. 206.

61. Garrett, Telepathy, in Search of a Lost Faculty, p. xi.

62. Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, p. 5.

63. Knudson, The Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 39.

felt unable to resist the impulse concerning his  
to function as a woman's spokesman. This comparative feeling  
is a reflection of the original condition of possession.  
The feeling, the individual woman's feeling, characterizes  
these women as this primitive possession as the prey of  
conquering white men who moved in on their fields and con-  
siderably weakened his personality. 60

The women's action, William J. Bennett, suggests the  
principle which states that the possession in language remaining  
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#### EVOLUTION OF THE PROPERTY

In the preceding section an evolutionary process was  
discussed in the various modes of division in which the  
woman's life was divided called "primitive property." 62  
Kandian woman's division's process to property to that  
of slavery to chattel and finally to slavery. 63

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60. Gellner, *Evolution and Revolution*, p. 200.  
61. Gellner, *Evolution and Revolution*, p. 200.  
62. Gellner, *Evolution and Revolution*, p. 200.  
63. Kandian, *The woman's life of property*, p. 60.



Though in many ways alchemy bares little resemblance to modern chemistry or astrology to modern astronomy, yet they have this connection, that the predecessor sought to investigate the same general subject as does the successor, and served in the capacity of the successor for its day and age. So divination to prophecy.

The prophet belonged to his culture, and that culture both influenced what he experienced and the manner in which he expressed that experience. Though they may have used means of dubious quality, for the day in which they functioned, those particular means were the most effective way of conveying their message as mediators to the people. J. M. P. Smith makes the case for the prophet even stronger when he maintains that these early prophets were the only kind of prophet that could have been effective in that particular age.<sup>64</sup>

When times changed, the prophet changed, or perhaps it should be said that the progressive spirit of the prophet influenced the times to change. In either case the prophet was extremely capable of adjusting to changing conditions. They were men with a message, and that which most effectively expressed that message, they adopted. An evolution of the prophet is a natural expectation.

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64. Smith, Prophet and his Problems, p. 57.





One of the first primitive forms transcended was that of magic. One scholar interprets the evils and enemies mentioned in the psalms as sorceries of magicians, and the appeals in these psalms, as petitions to God for protection against these evils.<sup>65</sup> The dividing line between magic and primitive divination is difficult to discern, and as the mediator transcended magic, he soon began to transcend primitive divination.

The character of Balaam, the Semitic augurer, reveals this transcendence of magic and divination in prophecy. Balaam was hired by Barak, King of Moab, to curse the Israelites. This would indicate his specialization in magic. Feeling unable to curse the Israelites, Balaam offered sacrifice according to a planned ritual and then withdrew from the scene to divine the will of the deity. The description is that of prepared ritual for the reception of an omen. Instead of finding his desired omen Balaam ascended another step in the evolution of the prophet and became aware of a divine compulsion, compelling him to do that which he was naturally reluctant to do. "Surely," he said, "There is no enchantment (magic) against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel. . . I have received commandment to bless." (conviction, God hath spoken).<sup>66</sup>

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65. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 288.

66. Num. 23:23,20. (Parenthetical content, my own).





Progression is also evident in the conception of possession. While all prophecy has as its basis the communication of the divine, the cruder ideas of this communication transformed the prophet into a convulsive hypnotic. The progressive idea of possession was that the prophet, though used as a channel for divine communication, was always aware of his own personal consciousness during the mediation. The frenzied ecstasies were no longer needed to convince the populace of the prophet's qualifications. Povah observes evidence in the Old Testament of this change as the descriptions of possession from earlier sources are of the divine spirit's leaping upon the prophet or being put on as a garment, and the later sources describe this same possession as the Spirit of God stirring the prophet's spirit.<sup>67</sup> This is in line with Paul's directive that the spirits of the prophets be subject to the prophets.<sup>68</sup>

Though dreams and visions have always been recognized as means of divination, their use, in the evolution of religious prophecy, gradually superseded ecstatic frenzy. The line of progression appears to be one of increasing calmness on the part of the prophet. A mystical type of ecstasy--what Knobel calls an inner rapture of the spirit--<sup>69</sup>

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67. Povah, The New Psychology and the Hebrew Prophets, p. 179.

68. I Cor. 14:32.

69. Rowley, "The Nature Of Prophecy In the Light Of Recent Study," Harvard Theological Review, p. 2.





gradually replaced that of frenzied ecstasy.

Progress in Hebrew prophecy is shown by Harper as follows: "The stages of development from Samuel (originally only a seer) through Elijah (a religious fanatic of the noblest type) to Amos (a prophet in the highest sense)."<sup>70</sup> Harper's three stages are the seer, as discussed in a previous section, the champion of Yahweh, and what he calls the classical prophet. In the classical prophet, religious prophecy is believed to have reached its acme.<sup>71</sup>

That which characterized the development of the higher prophet was the increasing addition of reason and reflection in prophecy. The great prophets were mental and spiritual geniuses, and their genius is revealed in their prophecy. Their oracles were based on their lofty conception of God, and on rational and reflective deductions from that concept. It was their belief in a moral God that led them to their belief in a moral world, and their belief in a moral world was basic in their prophetic oracles.<sup>72</sup>

It will be seen from the addition of reason and reflection to prophecy, that the character of the progress was a decreasing emphasis on the method of prophecy and an increasing emphasis on the content. That which was increasingly

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<sup>70</sup>. W. R. Harper, The Prophetic Element in the Old Testament (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1905), p. 81.

<sup>71</sup>. Loc. cit.

<sup>72</sup>. W. F. Bade, The Old Testament in the Light of Today. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1915), p. 172.





important in the evaluation of the prophet's contemporaries was what the prophet said, and not how he said it. The progress of prophecy was coupled with the progress of religion.<sup>73</sup>

There are several theories on the evolution of written prophecy. Many believe the written oracles to be the simple result of the advance of civilization. Others attribute it to the prophet's failure to accomplish his purpose by the spoken oracle. Probably both of these reasons are true. It is supposed that the written oracles were expansions of previously spoken oracles. These written expansions of the oracles of the classical prophets contain the three progressions in religious thought which culminated their prophetic and religious genius.<sup>74</sup>

a. Moralization of religion. The Hebrew prophets lifted religion from a series of outward observances to which a degenerate priestly cultus had relegated it, to the practice in daily life of the ethical precepts of the Ten Commandments. They saw Yahweh as a moral God, and thus one who could not be satisfied with anything less than moral worshippers. This subject will be fully treated in a later chapter.

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73. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 36.

74. Ibid., p. 20.

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## a. Moralization of Religion. The Hebrew prophets

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73. Handbook of Prophecy, p. 58.  
74. Ibid., p. 59.



b. Individualization of religion. Taking the religious life away its identification with the tribe or the nation, and identifying it with the individual believer reached its climax in Ezekiel.<sup>75</sup> Religion as a practice of the individual soul rather than the participation in group cultus, was a contribution of the genius and mediation of the Hebrew prophets.

c. Universalization of religion. Despite the henotheistic influence of the world in which they lived, the prophets insisted that there was but one God and that all peoples were subject both to his judgment and to his grace.

The study of the prophet's origin in the cultures of the world aids in understanding the prophet, his methods and his function. We are now prepared for an investigation of the prophet, his characteristics and his personality.

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75. Knudson, Prophetic Movement in Israel, p. 151.





### CHAPTER III

#### THE NATURE OF THE PROPHET

The psychology of religious prophecy is dependent upon the psychology of the prophet. Religious prophecy was the product of the religious prophet. He spoke its oracles; he made its office a dynamic influence. His characteristics aid in understanding his prophecy. It is the purpose of this chapter to investigate the prophetic nature and to analyze its attributes. This will consist of a study of the prophetic gift, an analysis of the prophet's personality, his dreams and his visions. The phenomena of physical and mystical ecstasy will be examined, together with the prophetic genius, God-consciousness, sound mind, poetic ability and psychological aptitudes.

#### THE PROPHET'S GIFTS

Because the prophet has powers which the majority of people do not have, his ability is called a gift. The common opinion is that the prophet is endowed with this gift at birth. Guillaume speaks of "the faculty of divination with which the diviner was born."<sup>1</sup>

The prophets themselves felt that their ability was

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1. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination, p. 202.

## CHAPTER III

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a gift, and considered it the evidence of their divine call.<sup>2</sup> When Elisha was preparing to replace Elijah as the prophet of Yahweh to Israel, he asked Elijah for a double portion of his spirit. Elijah was uncertain that this request could be granted, but said that if Elisha saw him as he was taken into Heaven, he would receive it. The inference is that Elijah could do little to develop that spirit; it had to be given him.<sup>3</sup> Guillaume appears to agree with this conception of the gift, as he states that neither the methods of divination, nor the cultivation of prophetic discipline are primarily responsible for the prophet.<sup>4</sup>

The prophet believed himself predisposed to prophecy. The following quotation from Forman concerning that great prophet of the middle ages, Nostradamus, illustrates this fact.

Though he constantly affirmed that he had done nothing marvelous, that he had received at birth certain astral aspects which predisposed him to the work, that all came from God, Nostradamus was nevertheless regarded as the greatest prophet of his time, and nightly he sat before the magical brass bowl filled to the brim with water, possibly in a state of self-hypnosis, listening to his familiar spirit, and nightly recorded his visions in those Centuries of verses which are still an object of study and speculation.<sup>5</sup>

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2. Ibid., p. 212.

3. II Kings 2:9.

4. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 202.

5. Forman, The Story of Prophecy, pp. 181-182.





When he first realized his gift, the prophet was startled or bewildered. Though she was a mere girl and died before she reached twenty-one, Joan of Arc was a prophetess. Her first awareness of her prophetic powers overwhelmed and frightened her. She was only fourteen years old. What she described as her prophetic gift is similar to what we now call psychic powers. Associating these powers with God, Joan interpreted them as her "call."<sup>6</sup> Her reaction to her psychic abilities is similar to that of two psychics described by Bendit. One was Garrett, the other, Bendit's wife. Both of these women became aware of their powers in childhood, and because of them felt as outsiders to other people. Psychic abilities tend to isolate those who have them.<sup>7</sup>

The prophetic gift is a capacity in the constitution of certain individuals which upon environmental encouragement and development, predisposes them to that office. The nature of psychic powers, whether they can be developed, whether they are constitutional, or whether they are limited to certain individuals, is a developing science, and there are no certain answers, only possibilities and probabilities. This subject will be thoroughly discussed in the chapter on psychical research.

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6. Ibid., p. 134.

7. L. J. Bendit, Paranormal Cognition (London: Faber & Faber LTD., 1944), p. 54.

When he first realized his gift, the prophet was startled or bewildered. Though she was a mere girl and died before she reached twenty-one, Joan of Arc was a prophetess. Her first awareness of her prophetic powers overwhelmed and frightened her. She was only fourteen years old. What she described as her prophetic gift is similar to what we now call psychic powers. Associating these powers with God, Joan interpreted them as her "call." Her reaction to her psychic abilities is similar to that of two psychics described by Benditt. One was Garrett, the other, Benditt's wife. Both of these women became aware of their powers in childhood, and because of them felt as out-agers to other people. Psychic abilities tend to isolate those who have them.

The prophetic gift is a capacity in the constitution of certain individuals which upon environmental encouragement and development, predisposes them to that office. The nature of psychic powers, whether they can be developed, whether they are constitutional, or whether they are limited to certain individuals, is a developing science, and there are no certain answers, only possibilities and probabilities. This subject will be thoroughly discussed in the chapter on psychological research.



Other qualities of the prophetic gift are more common among mankind. There are those that are found in what Davidson calls "thoughtful individuals." Persons who seek to understand life, keen observers of history and human nature, who ponder the destiny of the soul, and reach for the answer in the spiritual world, have something of the prophetic gift.<sup>8</sup> Their search for the divine has led them to a relationship with the divine, which, as will be shown, is essential in the prophetic function.

## II. THE PROPHET'S PERSONALITY

The dynamic attribute of the prophet's personality is his strong will. His prophetic experiences demanded a strong will, both to live and to proclaim the messages of those experiences. The prophet was not without his struggle, however. In fact, J. M. P. Smith believed that his visions were partly due to extended periods of hesitation and fear.<sup>9</sup> Another sees in Jeremiah's cursing the day of his birth the nirvana complex, the desire for oblivion to escape the cares of the world.<sup>10</sup> The strength of the prophet's personality is evidenced in his victory over these hesitations and fears.

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8. A. B. Davidson, Old Testament Prophecy (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1904), p. 92.

9. Smith, Prophet and His Times, p. 112.

10. Povah, The New Psychology and the Hebrew Prophets, p. 152. (Jere. 20: 14-18).

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His capacity for imagery is another attribute of his personality.<sup>11</sup> His mind retained the unusual impressions he received by mental visualizations of them. His ability to cease communication with the physical world--to be analyzed later in this chapter--left his mind free for impressions from extrasensory sources. The intensity of these impressions was often sufficient to stimulate his perceptive sense to visions.

This ability to perceive impressions via mental imagery, beside stimulating visions, aided the prophet's ministry in other ways. It made him a "good dreamer." His dreams were frequently productive of symbols which he interpreted as divine revelation. The vividness of his dreams retained their memory in the prophet's mind long after their duration, and served to convince him of their importance.

His imaginative capacity aided the prophet in expressing his message to the people. He was master of word pictures. Ezekiel, for instance, in his prose and poetry has a wealth of description of real or imagined scenes.<sup>12</sup> The use of the word picture, though more abundant in oriental pedagogy, is invaluable in all cultures as a means of communicating a message.

The prophet developed this aptitude for imagery to

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11. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 187.

12. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 565.





the extent that he was frequently an apocalypticist. His use of the symbol couched his descriptions of divine intervention in future world affairs. The prophet as an apocalypticist will be discussed in the next chapter.

The prophet has no personality type. There are representatives of many types among his colleagues. Dorothy Mills contrasts the extroverted type of personality as found in Elisha with the introverted type as exemplified by Elijah. She describes Elijah as stern and uncompromising. He preferred to live in the loneliness and austerity of the desert, where he often experienced visional inspiration. He was also subject to that "desolution of spirit that comes to austere and lonely souls." His personality is similar to the New Testament prophet, John the Baptist. Elisha, on the other hand, was a gentler and more gracious individual. He chose to live in the cities with his fellow men. He was even tempered, and occupied himself doing kindly acts of mercy.<sup>13</sup>

Amos and Hosea are examples of another contrast. Amos is the rational type. He is aloof and stormy in temperament. Leslie has him say, "I had loved the crash and the roar of the storm for such seemed akin to my nature."<sup>14</sup>

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13. Dorothy Mills, The People of Ancient Israel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 115.

14. Leslie, The Prophets Tell Their Own Story, p. 19.





That which reduced the more emotional prophets to tears scarcely drew a wince from him.<sup>15</sup> His disciplined mind was master of whatever tender sympathy he may have felt.<sup>16</sup>

In contrast to Amos is Hosea, he wore his heart on his outside, according to W. R. Smith, while Amos wore his outside in his heart.<sup>17</sup> Hosea, like Jeremiah, is emotional rather than logical.<sup>18</sup> While Amos emphasized the judgment of Yahweh, Hosea tempered this judgment with the love of Yahweh. His empathetic nature entered into the sufferings of others.<sup>19</sup> He and Jeremiah could cry out, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"<sup>20</sup> These prophets resemble the apocalyptic prophet of the New Testament, John the Disciple.

These men represent the more extreme of personality types: the majority of prophets lie between them. Isaiah, for instance shows both the stern rationality of Amos and the emotional tenderness of Hosea.<sup>21</sup>

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15. A. R. Gordon, The Prophets of the Old Testament (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1919), p. 77.

16. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 95.

17. W. R. Smith, The Prophets of Israel, p. 163.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

19. Knudson, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

20. Jere. 9:1.

21. Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

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 18. Ibid., p. 100.  
 19. Knudson, op. cit., p. 95.  
 20. Jer. 9:1.  
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The personality of the prophet is outstanding for its freedom from repression. This freedom can be credited to the prophet's sense of the forgiveness of his sins. Released from the dulling effects of buried conflicts, the prophet was able to sensitize his faculties to perceive the will of God.<sup>22</sup>

Regardless of his tendency to particular types of personality, the prophet was always capable of intense feeling.<sup>23</sup> The sin and suffering of the world drew his undivided attention and utilized his energies in their eradication. When he denounced sin, he did it vehemently, and when he described God's goodness, he used words warm with emotion.

The prophet had a passionate zeal for his mission. Though he may have undertaken it reluctantly, he executed it with enthusiasm. He identified himself with his cause. Mohammed had such a passion for the mission of Allah, which he discovered in his revelation, that the city of Mecca thought he was mentally unbalanced.<sup>24</sup>

### III. THE PROPHET'S DREAM

The prophet's dreams had an important place in his

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22. Leslie, op. cit., p. 80.

23. F. L. Strickland, Psychology of Religious Experience (New York: The Abington Press, 1924), p. 149.

24. P. E. Johnson, "Mohammedanism", Ferm, op. cit., p. 501.

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ministry. Their use varied with the individual prophet. It is not surprising that from the emphasis of psychoanalysis on dream interpretation that an attempt was made to psychoanalyze the prophet's dreams. Povah discovers these psychoanalytic dream symbols in both the prophet's dreams and visions.<sup>25</sup>

Modern psychics and prophets, availing themselves of current knowledge and terminology, describe their impressions of the subconscious and the superconscious dream. Their difference according to Garrett is that the superconscious dream lasts longer and is more rational and focused.<sup>26</sup> The Hindu Swami Akhilananda, disciple of the Indian prophet Ramakrishna, though acknowledging that dreams are caused by repressions in the subconscious mind and impressions of the dreamer's past, believes that dreams can also be creative in character and channels of spiritual enlightenment.<sup>27</sup>

Dreams of a creative or enlightening nature are a means of revelation. Either they disclose some new truth, or they preview some future event. The predictive dream played an important role in the religious prophecy of Daniel.

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25. Povah, op. cit., p. 131.

26. Garrett, Telepathy, in Search of a Lost Faculty, p. 72.

27. Akhilananda, Hindu Psychology, pp. 66-67.

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26. Garrett, *Telepathy, in Search of a Lost Faculty*, p. 72.  
27. Akshandha, *Hindu Psychology*, pp. 66-67.



The distress that a dream caused the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, is indicative both of the importance of the dream in that civilization, and the intensity of dreams of supposedly predictive nature. "His spirit was troubled and his sleep brake from him."<sup>28</sup> After the king had failed to find interpretation for his dreams among his magicians, astrologers and soothsayers, Daniel perceived the king's dreams in a "night vision," together with its interpretation. The interpretation was a prediction of the future kingdoms of the world.<sup>29</sup>

It was not until recently that it was intellectually permissible to speak of dreams as predictive. The experiments of Dunne have been a counteracting influence on this closed attitude. Dunne, noticing that his dreams had a tendency to be previsionary, conducted a series of experiments with them. He noted his dreams immediately upon awaking, and then recorded the events subsequent to the dream which were striking reenactments of the dream. He then induced others to conduct similar experiments, with the same remarkable results. Dunne describes these predictive dreams as "ordinary, appropriate, expectable dreams, but they were happening on the wrong nights."<sup>30</sup> His dreams,

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28. Dan. 2:1.

29. Ibid., 2.

30. Dunne, An Experiment With Time, p. 43.

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The dream analysis of Jung acknowledges the warning character of dreams. Jung's analysis will be thoroughly investigated in the chapter of psychic phenomena.

#### IV. THE PROPHET'S VISION

One of the most common experiences of the prophet is the vision. The term as used in the Old Testament refers to both sights and sounds received ultra-sensorially. The classical prophets made abundant use of the vision. Both the Hebrew and Arabian prophets valued visions above dreams as channels of revelation.<sup>32</sup> The vision seems to occur in neither the sleeping or the waking state. Rather it takes place in that suspended condition immediately preceding sleep.<sup>33</sup> In this state the conscious mind is relaxed though not completely at rest.

"The word of the Lord which I saw," is a recurrent theme of prophecy. The prophet was continually seeing his message. The entire Koran, Mohammed claimed, was received

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31. Ibid.,

32. von Orelli, The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom, p. 15.

33. Kaplan, Psychology of Prophecy, p. 120-21.

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As Kaplan points out, the vision was the result of profound interest.<sup>35</sup> The prophet had been focusing his thoughts on some aspects of the vision. Isaiah's vision of the Lord in the temple in which he received his prophetic call was preceded by the death of King Uzziah. The effect of this death upon the prophet could have been the emotional focus which precipitated the vision.<sup>36</sup> Visions come especially to those who are lonely--those who are introspective and dream, brood or meditate over the problems of their life.<sup>37</sup> It is known that Mohammed brooded considerably over those issues for which he sought revelation.<sup>38</sup> The possible effect of prolonged hesitation and fear upon visions was mentioned previously.

Dunne states that the predictive imagery which he perceived in his dreams was duplicated in his waking experiments. He found that by arresting the activity of his conscious mind, forbidding all forms of associative thinking,

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34. Koenig, "Prophecy," Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 10, pp. 384-90.

35. Kaplan, op. cit., p. 129.

36. Gordon, The Prophets of the Old Testament, p. 85.

37. Hamilton, The Prophets of Israel, p. 131.

38. Johnson, "Mohammedanism," Fern, The Encyclopedia of Religion, p. 500.-

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 35. Kaplan, op. cit., p. 122.  
 36. Gordon, The Prophecy of the Old Testament, p. 83.  
 37. Hamilton, The Prophecy of Isaiah, p. 131.  
 38. Johnson, "Mohammedanism," Ferns, The Encyclopedia of Religion, p. 500.



he could perceive images or "visions" which proved as predictive as his dreams.<sup>39</sup> The comparison of Dunne's experimental conditions to the prophet's devotional exercises is a significant analogy. The meditation and prayer of the prophet preceded his visionary experiences. By concentrating upon religious symbols, the prophet's mind became passive. While in this condition, the vision appeared from apparently inexplicable sources.<sup>40</sup> The subject will be discussed further in the chapter on psychic phenomena.

Daniel had a vision so intensely impressive that he fainted and was ill physically and dazed mentally for several days.<sup>41</sup> After another vision he complained of having no strength.<sup>42</sup> J. M. P. Smith points out that this reaction is common to such experiences, and that the "trance journeys" of the mystics often have the same debilitating effect.<sup>43</sup> Though erroneously, as will be shown later, Holscher labels the prophetic vision a hallucination, and lists fasting, wine and the night season as conditions favoring its occurrence. Youth, he says, are more inclined to experience hallucinations than their elders, and some individuals are more adapted constitutionally than others for their occurrence. The intensity of the hallucination depends on the

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39. Dunne, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

40. Hudson, The Law of Psychic Phenomena, p. 262.

41. Dan. 8:27; 7:15; 28.

42. Ibid., 10:8.

43. Smith, Prophet and His Times, p. 163.

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 40. Hudson, The Law of Psychic Phenomena, p. 282.  
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## V. THE PROPHET'S ECSTASY

The element of ecstasy is very common among the prophets.<sup>45</sup> It is the state which prepares the prophet for communication with the spiritual world. It was also the condition in which some of the primitive ecstasies delivered their oracle to the people. Ecstasy may be defined as the condition in which the conscious mind is overwhelmed and controlled by strongly elated emotions.

There are two major manifestations of ecstasy among the prophets, that of physical ecstasy and that of mystical ecstasy. The former --so called for want of a better name -- is characteristic of the earlier and more primitive prophets. Its manifestations were either that of violent bodily movement resembling frenzy and incoherent speech or a trance condition resembling daze or stupor. The prophet was as one "possessed," oblivious of his physical surroundings. Holscher has the classification, exaltierte ekstase, resembling the trance state.<sup>46</sup> The latter, as in the schreckvision, can result, possibly through fright, in the stoppage of both mental and physical functions.<sup>47</sup> He gives as an

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44. Holscher, Die Propheten, pp. 38-42.

45. Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

46. Holscher, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-16.

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44. Holmes, Die Propheten, pp. 58-62.

45. Kaelin, op. cit., p. 133.

46. Holmes, op. cit., pp. 10-16.

47. Ibid., p. 26.



example of this, the experience of Daniel, following his vision, when he said, "Then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground."<sup>48</sup> Philo, the Alexandrian Hebrew philosopher, believed that prophets delivered the oracles entirely in these states of frenzied ecstasy or trance.<sup>49</sup> He took this idea from Plato, who felt that no divination was possible to anyone in his full senses. Wheeler Robinson also seems to be of this opinion.<sup>50</sup> Though true of the primitive prophets, this interpretation is not applicable to the great Hebrew prophets,<sup>51</sup> whose communication with the deity was by their minds while in a state of consciousness and of self control.<sup>52</sup>

The best examples of physical ecstasy are the Mohammedan Suffis. A system of Mohammendan mysticism originating in Persia, Suffism has among its constituents the dervish, often called the whirling or howling dervish because of the physical exhibitions accompanying his afflatus. Al Ghazali described this condition as being reached by effort, or resulting from an overpowering influence.<sup>53</sup>

The dervish prepares for his ecstasy through a ritual, which lays great stress on the emotional religious life. It

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48. Dan. 10:9.

49. F. W. Farrer, The Minor Prophets (New York; Fleming H. Revell Co.), p. 10.

50. Rowley, "The Nature Of Prophecy In the Light Of Recent Study," p. 4.

51. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 40.

52. Rowley, op. cit.,

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51. Knudson, Reasons of Prophecy, p. 40.  
52. Howley, op. cit., p. 117.  
53. Gulliams, op. cit., p. 323.



lifts the worshiper in heightened exaltation and dreaminess until he reaches the stage of "hypnotic phenomena and fits of ecstasy."<sup>54</sup> While in this condition, the dervish is credited with psychic powers such as clairaudience, clairvoyance, levitation and with the ability to eat hot coals and glass.<sup>55</sup>

It is difficult to determine a genuine from a feigned ecstasy; the rapt ecstatic from the charlatan.<sup>56</sup> The distinct external marks of the prophet are a temptation to the imitator. This may be a clue to the nature of the false prophet frequently demonstrated in the Old Testament.

Speaking in tongues among the New Testament prophets is thought by some to be an ecstatic condition manifesting itself in automatisms of speech.<sup>57</sup> Holscher calls such speaking an example of Triebhaftes Reden. The intention, he says, is conscious, while the actual speaking is involuntary.<sup>58</sup>

Mystical ecstasy is the refinement of frenzied and trance ecstasy. The prophet in mystical ecstasy is also partially or entirely oblivious to the physical world. The modern representative of mystical ecstasy is the Yogi. The

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54. Encyclopedia of Islam, Vol. 1, p. 950.

55. Loc. cit.

56. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 307.

57. E. D. Starbuck, "tongues," Ferm, op. cit., p. 789.

58. Hölscher, op. cit., p. 33.

lifts the worshiper in heightened exaltation and dreaminess until he reaches the stage of "hysterical phenomena and the of ecstasy."<sup>54</sup> While in this condition, the worshiper is credited with psychic powers such as clairvoyance, clairvoyance, levitation and with the ability to eat hot coals and glass.<sup>55</sup>

It is difficult to determine a genuine from a feigned ecstasy; the rapid ecstatic from the charlatan.<sup>56</sup> The distinct external marks of the prophet are a temptation to the imitator. This may be a clue to the nature of the false prophet frequently demonstrated in the Old Testament.

Speaking in tongues among the New Testament prophets

is thought by some to be an ecstatic condition manifesting itself in automatisms of speech.<sup>57</sup> However only such speaking an example of Trichotomus Reden. The intention, he says, is conscious, while the actual speaking is involuntary.<sup>58</sup>

Mystical ecstasy is the refinement of frenzied and

trance ecstasy. The prophet in mystical ecstasy is also

partially or entirely oblivious to the physical world. The modern representative of mystical ecstasy is the Yogi. The

<sup>54</sup> Encyclopedia of Israel, Vol. I, p. 750.

<sup>55</sup> Encyclopedia of Israel, Vol. I, p. 750.

<sup>56</sup> Encyclopedia of Israel, Vol. I, p. 750.

<sup>57</sup> Encyclopedia of Israel, Vol. I, p. 750.

<sup>58</sup> Encyclopedia of Israel, Vol. I, p. 750.



Yoga exercises of Vedanta are for the cultivation of this mystical state, in which the ultimate goal is complete loss of self-consciousness.<sup>59</sup>

All practices for cultivating the mystical state, be they yoga, medieval Christian, or prophetic, are practices in symbol concentration. Some symbol or thought meaningful in the religion of the mystic is concentrated upon until the conscious mind becomes relaxed. The suspension of the conscious mind prepares the way for mystical ecstasy. Only by the suppression of the physical senses, the Mohamedan prophets thought, could divine communication occur.

Modern mediums and clairvoyants use symbol concentration to facilitate their reception either of spirit messages or extrasensory perceptions, depending upon their interpretation of these experiences. Garrett uses the ewe tree symbol "purely as a means of escaping from anything that might seem to hold me chained to the mundane effort of living."<sup>60</sup> Mrs. Upton Sinclair, an accomplished clairvoyant, puts her attention on one "uncomplicated" thought such as peace or joy.<sup>61</sup> Thoughts of joy and peace are exulting like the religious symbols used in preparation for divine communion.

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59. Akhilananda, op. cit., p.173.

60. Garrett, op. cit., p. 41.

61. Upton Sinclair, Mental Radio (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1930), p. 179.

Yoga exercises of Vedanta are for the cultivation of this mystical state, in which the ultimate goal is complete loss of self-consciousness.<sup>52</sup>

All practices for cultivating the mystical state, be they yoga, medieval Christian, or Protestant, are practices in symbol concentration. Some symbol or thought meaningful in the religion of the mystic is concentrated upon until the conscious mind becomes relaxed. The suspension of the non-ordinary mind prepares the way for mystical ecstasy. Only by the suspension of the physical senses, the Mohammedan prophetic thought, could divine communication occur.

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52. Akhilaranda, op. cit., p. 173.  
53. Garrett, op. cit., p. 41.  
54. Upton Sinclair, Mental Radio (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1930), p. 173.



The Christian mystics followed this same procedure. St. Theresa and Mme. Guyon are agreed that the first step into their union with God is choosing a subject for meditation upon which to direct their minds. In Mme. Guyon's description, "not reasoning about it, but mere fixing the mind." Buddhist mystical ecstasies have a similar origin.<sup>62</sup> Leuba points out that this preparation for mystical ecstasy is in substance the procedure in hypnosis. The only difference between the two, he feels, is the direct action of the hypnotist upon the subject, and the contrast between that which is anticipated of the deity by the believer, and, of the hypnotist by the subject.<sup>63</sup> The use of music in studying the prophet's physical or mystical ecstasy is frequently mentioned in the records. The sons of the prophets in the Old Testament are described as having harp, tabret, psaltery, and pipe accompanying their prophesying.<sup>64</sup> David separated for the service of the temple those who prophesied with cymbals, psalteries and harps.<sup>65</sup> Other prophets such as Daniel and Ezekiel had their ecstatic experiences near rivers. The rhythmic sounds of the current evidently had a relaxing effect resembling that of music.<sup>66</sup> Levy-Bruhl states that

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62. J. H. Leuba, The Psychology of Religious Mysticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1925), p. 167.

63. Ibid., p. 172.

64. I Sam. 10:5.

65. I Chron. 25:1.

66. Davidson, op. cit., p. 128.

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63. J. H. Lamba, The Psychology of Religious Mysticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1925), p. 167.  
 64. Ibid., p. 172.  
 65. I Sam. 10:5.  
 66. I Chron. 15:1.  
 67. Davidson, op. cit., p. 128.



music, especially in primitive religions, can cause the believer to lose consciousness in his religious ecstasy, as it separates his mind from his body.<sup>67</sup>

There is a disagreement concerning the universality of ecstatical experience among the prophets. An array of scholars can be listed on both sides of the question. The difference in opinion, I believe, can be greatly reduced if we keep in mind that ecstasy, besides including the frenzy, also includes the mystical. As Knobel points out, prophetic ecstasy should not be identified with its lowest element, the dancing dervish type, but with the inner rapture of the spirit, which he says, is ecstasy in its proper etymological sense.<sup>68</sup> Holscher also finds a union of purpose in the most advanced mysticism, and the old cultic dances,<sup>69</sup> and hence sees the ecstatical experience among all prophets.<sup>70</sup> Ecstasy in the broad meaning of the term, I believe was common to all prophets, for I find no evidence to the contrary, save the evidence of silence, while there is abundant indication of its presence. It was the condition in which the prophets received many of their messages. Leslie has Isaiah say, "Yahweh granted me an ecstatic moment of insight."<sup>71</sup> These experiences carried the unshakable conviction that the

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67. Levy-Bruhl, op. cit., pp. 129, 133.

68. Rowley, op. cit., p. 2.

69. Holscher, op. cit., p. 23.

70. Ibid., p. 2.

71. Leslie, op. cit., p. 104.





supernatural had been experienced.

## VI. THE PROPHET'S GENIUS

The prophet is often referred to as a genius because of his contribution to religious thought. Lyttleton thinks of him as a genius primarily because of his reception of ultra-sensory knowledge.<sup>72</sup> The combination of this mediumistic power and a highly gifted mentality, she feels, is the definition of genius.<sup>73</sup> She uses the term prophet and genius synonymously.<sup>74</sup> This definition corresponds to the anticipation of Carrel: "What extraordinary penetration would result from the union of disciplined intelligence and of telepathic aptitude."<sup>75</sup> It is conceivable that a high degree of disciplined intelligence with the additional resource of extra-sensory knowledge would be man in his most advanced state. The French scientist, Eugene Osty, was so impressed by this combination that he considered the medium as a forerunner of a future humanity on the evolutionary scale.<sup>76</sup>

The prophet's genius is demonstrated not only through his psychic powers but also through his brilliant mind. With keen insight they understood human life and nature, though they may not always have cared to analyze or explain what

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72. Lyttleton, op. cit., p. 253.

73. Ibid., p. 216.

74. Ibid., p. 181

75. Alexis Carrel, Man the Unknown (New York: Harper & Bros., 1935), p. 126.

76. Eugene Osty, Supernormal Faculties in Men (London: Menthuen, 1923), p. 395.





they understood.<sup>77</sup> Their sense of values was usually inerrant as they quickly discerned what was important and what was not.<sup>78</sup>

Pfeiffer describes the prophecy of the last twenty-six chapters of Isaiah as coming from one who was above all, a thinker.<sup>79</sup> The writings of the Hebrew prophets are tokens of the prophet's genius. Theirs is literature representing the best in Hebrew style, with a mastery of language, and insights evident of a wide scope of historical observation.<sup>80</sup>

Though it is true that the prophets had excellent minds, it is equally true that these excellent minds were necessary for a wise management of their paranormal cognitive abilities.<sup>81</sup> The wise direction of these abilities requires even more than a disciplined intelligence. Character, ethical standards of conduct, and a humanitarian motivation are needed.<sup>82</sup> The study of the prophet's character will be taken up in the next chapter.

## VII. THE PROPHET'S CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD

No study of the prophet's nature would be adequate

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77. Hamilton, op. cit., p. 106.

78. Ibid., p. 195.

79. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 463.

80. W. R. Smith, op. cit., pp. 125-7.

81. Bendit, op. cit., p. 60.

82. Loc. cit.





that neglected the prophet's God. The relationship which the prophet felt toward his God greatly effected his office and his activities. This relationship was one of god-consciousness. Leslie calls it "conscious of the presence"<sup>83</sup> and J. M. P. Smith, "a vivid consciousness of God."<sup>84</sup> The majority of studies on the prophet's consciousness of God refer to the great Hebrew prophets. These prophets experienced in the superlative sense what the other prophets approximated in lesser degrees. The primitive diviner was conscious of a presence of a supernatural power. The conscious communion with God that characterized the great prophet was different in quality from the augur's consciousness of the supernatural power. The prophet's relationship was person to person. It approximated the father-child relationship, experienced in the Christian religion.<sup>85</sup>

The prophets who possessed this consciousness of the presence of God were scarcely cognizant of a contrast between the natural and the supernatural. To a prophet of Isaiah's stature both of these categories were united in the ways of God with men.<sup>86</sup> His communion with God was natural, so that any phenomenon attributed to God was also natural, or at least, expected.

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83. Leslie, op. cit., p. 228.

84. Smith, op. cit., p. 209.

85. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 289.

86. W. R. Smith, op. cit., p. 311.





Cohon characterizes the prophet as one "allied with the eternal."<sup>87</sup> They were the deity's earthly champions and they were constantly aware of their appointment.<sup>88</sup> Though this consciousness was vivified in his ecstatic experiences, it remained with the prophet at all times.<sup>89</sup> It was the simple conviction that God had spoken and that the prophet must also speak.

This conviction was often the fruitage of suffering. The prophet learned to know his God, "de profundis" of life. The prophecies of Hosea and Jeremiah contain many references to their sufferings. Hosea's unhappy home life, if taken literally, and Jeremiah's intolerable task of pronouncing doom on his beloved nation, drove them repeatedly to their God for mercy and consolation. Out of such experiences they developed a consciousness of the living presence of God, probably unattainable otherwise.<sup>90</sup>

While the conviction that God had spoken was often experienced through suffering, it also frequently led to further suffering. The message that the prophet had to proclaim for his God was often denunciating and judgmental in character. Those who experienced the rebuke of those oracles

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87. Beryl D. Cohon, The Prophets, Their Personalities and Teaching (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939), p. 224.

88. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 184.

89. Leslie, op. cit., p. 204.

90. Moses Bottenwieser, The Prophets of Israel (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1914), p. 80.





often resented them. Were they persons of means, their retribution was severe. Despite the unusual freedom allowed the prophet, Micaiah found himself in Ahab's dungeon and Jeremiah in Zedekiah's prison. Daniel had similar experiences in Babylonia. Their refusal to compromise with the conviction that God had spoken or to mitigate their message, persisted to martyrdom. The conviction that God has spoken, received through experiencing his presence, is the highest form of religious prophecy.<sup>91</sup>

The prophet's alliance with the eternal manifested itself in the truths of his messages. Truth never changes. The truths of the spirit are always true and the prophets understood them.<sup>92</sup> Those prophecies which "survive the passage of time" do so, not because they are received in a miraculous manner or uttered by an outstanding personage, but because they "enshrine truth."<sup>93</sup>

#### VIII. THE PROPHET'S SOUND MIND

When Elisha sent one of the sons of the prophets to inform Jehu of his coming kingship, a certain officer in the company referred to him as a "mad fellow."<sup>94</sup> The actions of

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91. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination, p. 100.

92. Hamilton, The Prophets of Israel, p. 23.

93. Lyttleton, op. cit., p. 184.

94. I Kings 9:11.





prophets as well as other representatives of genius are often mistaken for madness. This is because both the prophet and the insane are frequently affected by influences seemingly beyond their voluntary control. Though they often have this uncontrolled influence in common, the nature of the influence and its effects in the subject's life, make an extreme distinction between the prophet and the madman.

J. M. P. Smith has discerned the major distinction between the ecstatic conditions of the prophet and those of an unbalanced personality. That difference is the prophet's close touch with life.<sup>95</sup> Bendit states he was "properly earthed."<sup>96</sup> By this expression he means that the prophet's activity was vitally concerned with the every day activities of mankind. He states further that unless one with psychical powers is "properly earthed," his personality will become pathological.<sup>97</sup>

The prophet maintained his close contact with life by sharing the fellowship of his fellowmen, and by his exposure to the sorrows of life.<sup>98</sup> His faith had matured in the "slough of despond," and had been his salvation in that

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95. Smith, Prophet and His Problems, p. 135.

96. Bendit, Paranormal Cognition, p. 59.

97. Loc. cit.

98. Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, p. 16.





tribulation.<sup>99</sup> He agonized in spirit over the evils of life, and had found a means of overcoming them. He was a practical individual.<sup>100</sup> As Hamilton has shown, his visions, which could have indicated an unbalanced nature, prevented this interpretation by being related to practical living.<sup>101</sup> References to life after death are rare in prophetic oracles. That which they spoke applied to life on this earth.<sup>102</sup> The prophet differed from others particularly in his psychological powers; yet he used these powers in a practical way--to aid man's search for truth.<sup>103</sup>

The prophet's soundness of mind is demonstrated in his message. Povah has discovered basic psychological principles in his oracles. The challenge both for maturity and for a return to reality are in the prophet's message. Both immaturity and repression are signs of personality disintegration. The exhortation to become mature, found in Moses and the earlier prophets, reaches its climax in Amos and Hosea. The prophet urged his people to grow out of "group phase theology and ethics," and as individuals to face and love the God of justice and kindness. He desired them to mature to the extent that they experienced God for themselves, rather than continuing to reach him through family

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99. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 493.

100. J. M. P. Smith, loc. cit.

101. Hamilton, op. cit., p. 102.

102. Knudson, Prophetic Movement in Israel, p. 172.

103. Rowley, op. cit., p. 4.





and tribal patterns.<sup>104</sup>

A return to reality is inherent in the prophet's plea for repentance. The Hebrew word for repent is שוב, meaning "to return." Ezekiel wrote, "Repent and turn yourselves."<sup>105</sup> The prophet believed his people were suffering from a "buried complex." They had repressed their awareness of personal shortcomings and sins, rather than confessing them to their God. Repentance includes the psychological concept of catharsis and adds to it genuine sorrow for sin and determination for improvement. A blocked catharsis is repression. The oracle repeated more than any other was repentance--to face God and face oneself.<sup>106</sup>

The test of whether or not the prophet's psychic experiences are evidential of mental stability is their subsequent effect on his personal life. Though the resemblance of the vision to the hallucination can not be overlooked, and though the similarity of other psychic impressions to delusion and figments of the imagination can not be denied, the fact remains that delusions and hallucinations are symptoms of a disintegrating personality. They both weaken and demoralize the character.<sup>107</sup> The absence of disintegration

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104. Povah, op. cit., pp. 117-118.

105. Ezek. 14:6.

106. Povah, op. cit., p. 201.

107. Akhilananda, op. cit., p. 148.

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<sup>104</sup> Povah, op. cit., pp. 117-118.

<sup>105</sup> Ezek. 18:3.

<sup>106</sup> Povah, op. cit., p. 201.

<sup>107</sup> Akhland, op. cit., p. 148.



of personality and weakness of character among the prophets reveals the wholesome quality of their psychical experiences. The prophet appears strengthened and integrated by these experiences.<sup>108</sup> The lives of the great prophets, in view of the nature of their task and the difficulties they faced, are outstanding examples of well integrated personalities. Isaiah's composure in contrast to the general fear and panic of others during the Assyrian seige of Jerusalem is a mark of a sound mind.<sup>109</sup> The mental torture to which Jeremiah was subjected for a long period of time, would have mentally disintegrated a less stable personality. The ability of Daniel to overcome fear to the extent that he could arrest his mind to receive a recurrence of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, when his own life depended upon his reception of that dream, is indicative of a strong and integrated will.<sup>110</sup>

#### IX. THE PROPHET'S POETIC ABILITY

There is a significant resemblance between the prophet and the poet. There appears to be a common ground somewhere in their development. The association of poetry and prophecy was revered among ancient peoples. Recitation of some

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108. Loc. cit.

109. Isaiah 37:1-7.

110. Dan. 2:19.

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108. Isa. 41:1-5.  
109. Isaiah 38:1-7.  
110. Dan. 2:10.



form of poetry was the sign of one who had communication with the spirits. Perhaps this partially accounts for the fact that a large portion of ancient prophecy is in verse. According to Guillaume no prophet in Israel could gather an audience unless he was a poet.<sup>111</sup>

The writings of the Hebrew prophets are the best examples of literary style in the Old Testament.<sup>112</sup> Ezekiel's talents in visualization and word pictures has been mentioned in a previous section. Though Robinson does not highly evaluate the message of Nahum, he credits the prophet's powers of description and his artistic use of language and metaphor, with preserving the oracle.<sup>113</sup>

The three chaptered oracle of Habbakkuk has the essentials of rhapsodic literature.

A problem of contemporary history has been stated in the form of dramatic dialogue, solved in the mingled recitative and rythm of the Doomform, and then the solution is realized in the full splendor of a lyric ode.<sup>114</sup>

Skinner believes that Jeremiah, when he was socially ostracized, wrote poems of haunting melancholy like Cowper.<sup>115</sup> Amos' mastery of the pen has been described previously.

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111. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 245.

112. Farrar, The Minor Prophets, p. 21.

113. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel, p. 13.

114. Kaplan, Psychology of Prophecy, p. 65.

115. Skinner, op. cit., p. 132. (Jere. 9:1-8).

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111. Gullis, *op. cit.*, p. 245.  
 112. *Isaiah, The Minor Prophets*, p. 21.  
 113. Robinson, *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel*, p. 15.  
 114. Kaplan, *Psychology of Prophecy*, p. 65.  
 115. Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 132. (Jer. 9:1-3).



W. R. Smith calls his oracle, "one of the best examples of Hebrew style."<sup>116</sup> The poetry in the latter portion of the prophecy of Isaiah, Pfeiffer believes, marks this prophet as the Milton of Hebrew poetry.<sup>117</sup>

Nanak, the founder of Sikhism in India, was a poet. The writers of the inspired Bhagavad-Gita, the supreme devotional scripture of India, were poets. The rishis, ancient Indian prophets, who were believed to have written the literal words of God in the Vedas, also were poets.<sup>118</sup>

That which has apparently kept the prophets from being considered classical poets was their successful careers as prophets. Not only are their oracles frequently poetic, but their use of words and sentence structure disclose the "stamp of poetic genius."<sup>119</sup>

Their artistic use of language, the intense feeling and broad vision in their writings, draw the prophet and the poet together, and make the psychology of the prophet similar to the psychology of the poet.<sup>120</sup> Micklem interprets prophetic experience as poetic inspiration.<sup>121</sup> Myers called poetry, half art and half prophecy.<sup>122</sup> The poet's ecstasy is known

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116. W. R. Smith, op. cit., p. 125.

117. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 463.

118. C. S. Braden, "Rishi," Ferm, op. cit., p. 69.

119. Kaplan, loc. cit.

120. Ibid., p. 60.

121. Rowley, op. cit., p. 27.

122. F. W. H. Myers, "Tennyson as Prophet," Science and a Future Life (London: Macmillan Co., 1893), p. 164.





as the furor poeticus, and is literally translated, "the frenzy of the poet." The poet too was aware of the entry into his consciousness of knowledge and visions from inexplicable sources.<sup>123</sup> The poet, Alfred Lord Tennyson, had pronounced experiences of these inexplicable entries. His poem "Ancient Sage," contains these lines.

I touch'd my limbs, the limbs  
 Were strange not mine--and yet in shade of doubt,  
 But utter clearness, and thro' loss of Self  
 The gain of such larger life as match'd with ours  
 Were Sun to spark--unshadowed in words  
 Themselves but shadows of a shadow world.<sup>124</sup>

The description of these lines is known to be based on the poet's own experience. It was a "resumption into the universal following upon a self induced ecstasy."<sup>125</sup> Though this is not furor poeticus in the sense of frenzied ecstasy, it is clearly mystical ecstasy. The resemblance of Tennyson's inspiration to that of the prophet is increased by the prophetic prediction in "Locksley Hall." This prediction will be discussed in a later chapter. Both its form and content correspond to the predictions of the religious prophets.

These signs of Tennyson's prophetic nature are more pronounced in the light of his opinions on extrasensory perception. He believed in communication between human minds

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123. Lyttleton, op. cit., p. 253.

124. Myers, op. cit., p. 152.

125. Ibid., p. 158.

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<sup>123</sup> Lytton, op. cit., p. 228.  
<sup>124</sup> Myers, op. cit., p. 128.  
<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 128.



that could not be explained by sensory interpretations.<sup>126</sup>

He was also associated with the British Society for Psychological Research.<sup>127</sup> His personality like those of the prophets, was one of strength and wisdom gained through suffering.<sup>128</sup> He also had ascended de profundis.

As ancient a scholar as Socrates observed this resemblance between prophets and poets. The poet as the prophet, he believed, accomplished his task by "certain natural inspiration, and under the influence of enthusiasm."<sup>129</sup>

Orelli distinguished between the poet as the creator of his signs and figures, and the prophet as the receiver of his symbols from an external source of inspiration.<sup>130</sup> While there may be an element of truth in this differentiation, it is dubious that we can deny the poet's reception of signs and figures through inspiration, or that we can eliminate entirely the prophet's creative influence in his imagery.

#### X. THE PROPHET AS A PSYCHOLOGIST

There have been allusions in the sections of this chapter to the prophet's knowledge of human nature. This

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126. Ibid., p. 160.

127. Elwood Worcestor, Making Life Better (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1933), p. 234.

128. Myers, op. cit., p. 128.

129. Kaplan, loc. cit.

130. Orelli, "Prophecy," Schaff Herzog, op. cit., Vol. 9, p. 232.

that could not be explained by sensory interpretations.<sup>126</sup>  
 He was also associated with the British Society for Psychological Research.<sup>127</sup> His personality like those of the prophets, was one of strength and wisdom gained through suffering.<sup>128</sup> He also had ascended as prophets.

As another scholar as associates observed this resemblance between prophets and poets. The poet as the prophet, he believed, accomplished his task by "certain natural inspiration, and under the influence of enthusiasm."<sup>129</sup> Orrell distinguished between the poet as the creator of his signs and figures, and the prophet as the receiver of his symbols from an external source of inspiration.<sup>130</sup> While there may be an element of truth in this differentiation, it is dubious that we can deny the poet's reception of signs and figures through inspiration, or that we can eliminate entirely the prophet's creative influence in his imagery.

#### X. THE PROPHET AS A PSYCHOLOGIST

There have been allusions in the sections of this chapter to the prophet's knowledge of human nature. This

126. Ibid., p. 150.  
 127. Elwood Worcester, Making Life Better (New York: Cass. Gardner's Sons, 1923), p. 121.  
 128. Myers, op. cit., p. 128.  
 129. Kegan, loc. cit.  
 130. Orrell, "Prophecy," Schaff Herzog, op. cit., Vol. 9, p. 232.



understanding equipped him as the psychologist of his day. He was an alert observer of the psychological hints that betray the inner feelings and unseen problems of those who seek to hide them. He exposed the false prophet, uncovering the insincerity and ignorance he sought to conceal. The prophet Micaiah's simulation of these false prophets' speech and attitude as he stood before King Ahab, was such a clever and subtly sarcastic reproduction that it provoked the king's wrath.<sup>131</sup>

The irony of Elijah at the sacrifice scene on Mount Carmel illustrates the prophet's astute powers of observation. The conduct of the prophets of Baal at this occasion was primitively savage. The mockery of the prophet of Yahweh is in my opinion, humor. Watching them cut themselves until they bled profusely, listening to them howl as they leaped upon the altar from morning until evening, Elijah, in contrasting calmness, suggested that they cry louder. Since Baal was a god, he would hear them. Perhaps Baal was busy talking to someone, or was away on a trip.<sup>132</sup> Perhaps he was taking his midday nap or was at the lavatory. He was master of the situation because he psychologically understood the prophets of Baal.

Having unusual ability to see through the rational-

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131. I Kings 22: 15-16.

132. Ibid., 18:27.

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izations of men to their hidden motives of guilt, fear and ego inflation, he availed himself of this astute psychological understanding in effecting his message from his God and in bringing the guilty sinner to repentance. King Saul was given direction by the prophet Samuel to fight against the Amalekites to punish them for their previous hostility to Israel, with explicit instructions from Yahweh that no spoils were to be taken from the domestic animals of the Amalekites--they were all to be slain. Either through weakness in controlling his warriors or through personal greed, Saul either allowed or directed his army to take the best of the flocks alive. As Samuel approached the conquering Saul on his return, he asked, "What meaneth this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of oxen which I hear?" Saul hastily explained that the people--not himself--had saved only the best of the flocks, and that for the purpose of sacrificing to Yahweh, and that all the others were destroyed. Samuel understood immediately that Saul was attempting to shift the blame to his people, and that the real source of trouble was his greed for the spoils of war. He was not deceived by the pious assertion that the spoils were for Yahweh. With directed remarks he soon brought Saul to confess, "I have sinned."<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>133</sup>. I Sam. 15.

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Hezekiah, king of little Judah, was visited by an apparent good will delegation from Babylon. Assyria, not Babylon, was at this time the military threat of the east. Hezekiah was so honored and flattered to receive this delegation, that he showed them the riches of the Judean treasury. His ego was so inflated by this visit of the greater to the smaller, that he forgot all precautions and desired to expand his inflated prestige still further before these men. Isaiah the prophet was quick to discern the foolishness of this move, and also the vanity in the motives of the king. He warned the king that having seen the treasures of Judah, Babylon would covet them and would some day conquer Judah and take them as spoils of war.<sup>134</sup>

The prophets used their ability as psychologists to strike with their message at the most vital spot. The prophet Nathan had the difficult task of reproving King David for adultery and murder. He had stolen Bathsheba as his wife, and then had had her husband, Uriah, slain in battle. He penetrated the king's natural resistance by allegorizing the crimes. He told the king of a rich man who had many flocks and herds, and of a poor man who had just one little ewe lamb, toward which he had become very affectionate. When the rich man wanted meat to banquet his guest, he slew the

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<sup>134</sup>. Isaiah 39.

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poor man's lamb. David was enraged at such injustice and demanded to know who in his kingdom had done this thing, that he should die for his crime. Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man." Stunned by his involuntary self condemnation, David confessed, "I have sinned against the Lord."<sup>135</sup>

The prophet was also a proficient self-analyst. Pfeiffer calls Jeremiah the first of the mystics who have recorded their experiences in that state.<sup>136</sup> Battenwieser terms sections of Jeremiah's writings as "the most wonderful and logical pieces of self-analysis that we have in any literature."<sup>137</sup>

Scholars from Duhm to Eissfeldt, according to Pfeiffer have felt that Isaiah 2:1-10 is an introspective description of the psychology of the prophetic trance. By objectifying his psychic self or trance personality, (verse 6) he distinguishes it from his normal self.<sup>138</sup>

If this chapter has presented both an objective and analytic description of the nature of the prophet, it has served its purpose. A thorough understanding of his nature is prerequisite to any understanding of his function. It is the intention of the next chapter to investigate the function of the prophet.

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135. II Sam. 12.

136. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 498.

137. Battenwieser, op. cit., p. 102.

138. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 446.

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136. Eller, op. cit., p. 498.  
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138. Eller, op. cit., p. 448.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE FUNCTION OF THE PROPHET

We have investigated the prophet's origin in the cultures of the world, noting the effect these cultures had in his development. We have analyzed the prophet himself, listing the characteristics that composed his nature. That which remains is the study of the prophetic function. The psychology of religious prophecy is largely dependent upon the prophetic function for its data. The investigations of this chapter will begin with the need for the prophet among the peoples of the world. The prophet's general and specific tasks will be evaluated together with an examination of his inspiration and revelation. The prophet's relation to others in his society will be studied for the purpose of more thoroughly understanding his own function. The prophet's use of the apocalypse and his belief in a moral universe will receive separate treatment. A special section will deal with the function of the Hebrew prophet, with the institution of the sons of the prophets, and with the false prophet.

#### I. THE NEED FOR THE PROPHET

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#### I. THE NEED FOR THE PROPHET

The institutions which have endured in the social structure are those for which there is a need. Should



something attempt to receive man's attention when it serves no human need, it will fail in its attempt, and rapidly pass out of existence.

The need which religious prophecy met was communication from the supernatural. Those beliefs of mankind which led to his need for prophecy center around his belief in divine powers. These divine powers mysteriously determine man's welfare and destiny. To secure the good will of these powers man must know something about them, particularly their desires. There is a need for a qualified mediator, one who is specially gifted to receive and relay communication from the divine. Hence the prophet.<sup>1</sup>

Also encouraging the prophet was the popular desire for signs and wonders. Signs and wonders have the appearance of divine intervention, and man, desirous of this intervention to clear his atmosphere of mystery, is attracted to them. As will be shown in a later section, one of the functions of the prophet is performing wonders.

The prophet was the key man in a crisis. When the armies of the enemy were at the gates of Jerusalem, Isaiah proclaimed his oracle which inspired hope.<sup>2</sup> When the returned exiles became delinquent in their task of rebuilding the Temple, the prophet Haggai aroused his people from their

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1. Eiselen, Prophecy and the Prophets, p. 18.

2. Isaiah 37.

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apathy.

In these times of religious crisis the acknowledged ways of interpreting the will of God often break down, and a new revelation of truth is needed. It is necessary to go back, not to any set of principles or traditions, but to the deity himself.<sup>3</sup> The mediator who stepped forward to proclaim, "Thus saith the Lord" with authority, was the prophet of salvation.

Davidson has discerned three crises in Israel from the Exodus to the Exile, in which only a competent prophet prevented the triumph of falsehood. These crises are:

1. At the close of the period of the Judges, marked by career of Samuel.

2. During the crisis in the Northern Kingdom caused by Ahab's introduction of the Zidonian Baal worship and the subsequent persecution of Yahweh's worshippers, marked by the appearance of Elijah.

3. In the downfall of the Kingdom of Judah, following a succession of defeats, people were either turning to the gods of stronger nations or were clinging fanatically to Yahweh. Into this situation Jeremiah entered and taught the people to look to the future of hope and a new covenant, though their nation was collapsing.

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3. W. R. Smith, The Prophets of Israel, p. 82.

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<sup>2</sup> W. W. Smith, The Prophets of Israel, p. 88.



Israel preserved the truths of its culture when its neighbors failed, because it had prophets of wisdom in its crucial periods.<sup>4</sup>

## II. DEFINITION OF A PROPHET

Plato called prophecy "the noblest of arts." Socrates defined it as "the special gift of heaven, and the source of chiefest blessing among men."<sup>5</sup> The Delphic oracle said that there were many fortune tellers, but few true prophets.<sup>6</sup>

Guillaume classifies the prophets into two types, the inductive prophet and the mantic prophet. These terms refer to the prophet's mode of functioning. The inductive prophet obtained his message inductively, that is, he concluded it from the occurrence of some event to which he attached universal and prophetic meaning. He took his messages from omens, either as he observed them spontaneously, as in nature, or as he actively prepared the conditions for the occurrence of the omen. He functioned somewhat as a lot; he simply gave answers to alternative questions. The inductive prophet was not the great prophet.

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4. Davidson, Old Testament Prophecy, p. 28.

5. Forman, The Story of Prophecy, p. 18.

6. Ibid., p. 36.





"Mantic" means prophetic, and comes from the Greek word "mantis," meaning seer. The prophet classified as mantic received his message in an extrasensory manner, that is, he did not induce them from arbitrary and accepted omens, but he received them as invasions of his conscious mind from unexplained sources. As an omen may occur spontaneously to an inductive prophet, so a prophetic oracle could enter the mind of a mantic prophet. These utterances were often predictive, and were characterized by an active relationship with the divine.<sup>7</sup> The mantic prophet made religious prophecy eminent, and his prophecy is the particular interest of this study.

The essential requirement of the prophet is that he be in communication with the spiritual world.<sup>8</sup> Prophetic communion differs from the common relationship with the deity. In Israel especially, the prophetic communion was mediative between God and the nation. It provided the prophet with special insight into the providential significance of political events. In the various cultures prophetic communion was facilitated by a paranormal faculty, which functioned especially through visions.<sup>9</sup>

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7. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination, p. 38.

8. Ibid., p. 37.

9. Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, pp. 7-10.





The primary conception of the prophet is one who declares something for the deity.<sup>10</sup> His possession of a word from God, not obtained from contemporary religious thought, but originating in his own meditation, is enough to identify him as a prophet.<sup>11</sup> He was the mouthpiece for the deity, the inspired spokesman for God. The prophets accepted this definition. Amos wrote, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealed His secrets unto His servants, the prophets."<sup>12</sup>

The prophet's office as declaring the word of God has its resemblance both to the philosopher and the soothsayer; yet it differs from them both. Knudson links divination with prophecy in its roots. The soothsayer and the prophet both seek communication from the divine. He compares philosophy to prophecy in its fruits. The philosopher and the prophet both seek to give the world a better understanding of life.<sup>13</sup>

The prophet obtained his word from God by either the external or the internal method. The external method is prophesying by omens; the internal is prophesying by possession or inspiration.<sup>14</sup> The external method was used by the inductive prophet, while possession and inspiration

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10. Kaplan, Psychology of Prophecy, p. 6.

11. W. R. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

12. Amos 3:7.

13. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 45.

14. Eiselen, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-21.

The primary conception of the prophet is one who desires something for the duty.<sup>10</sup> His possession of a word from God, not obtained from contemporary religious thought, but originating in his own meditation, is enough to identify him as a prophet.<sup>11</sup> He was the spokesman for the duty, the inspired spokesman for God. The prophets accepted this definition. Amos wrote, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealed his secrets unto his servants, the prophets."<sup>12</sup>

The prophet's office as desiring the word of God has its resemblance both to the philosopher and the seer; yet it differs from them both. Davidson links divination with prophecy in its roots. The seer's and the prophet's both seek communication from the divine. The philosopher's philosophy to prophecy is like truth. The philosopher and the prophet both seek to give the world a better understanding of life.<sup>13</sup>

The prophet retained his word from God by either the external or the internal method. The external method is prophesying by means; the internal is prophesying by possession or inspiration.<sup>14</sup> The external method was used by the prophetic prophet, while possession and inspiration

10. Kaplan, *Prophecy of Prophecy*, p. 2.  
 11. W. H. Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 1.  
 12. Amos 3:7.  
 13. Davidson, *Second Lights of Prophecy*, p. 22.  
 14. Davidson, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-21.



were major modi operandi of the mantic prophet. Guillaume's classification, however, is somewhat arbitrary, as there is an overlapping of methods used by the prophets. His classification best serves as one of emphases.

The Biblical definition of prophet is restrictive. He is a man of God. This expression is often used as a variant for prophet. He is the servant of Yahweh. The prophet had an extremely humble attitude toward his God. He was the messenger of God. His function was often carrying out certain "errands" for Yahweh. He is the interpreter of God, the seer of the things of God, the speaker of the things of God to man.<sup>15</sup> Pfeiffer defines the Hebrew prophet as one into whom the divine spirit entered.<sup>16</sup> Among the earlier prophets the entrance occurred through possession, while in the later prophets it had undergone refinement and could be characterized as a mental or spiritual impression interpreted by the prophet as the inspiration of the divine spirit. It is a purpose of this thesis to go beyond the popular interpretation of the prophetic function to the psychological processes involved. The Biblical prophet was also a poet, healer, teacher, preacher and statesman.<sup>17</sup> These functions will be taken up

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15. Davidson, op. cit., p. 89.

16. Written criticism by the second reader, R. H. Pfeiffer, on the first draft of the dissertation.

17. Kaplan, op. cit., p. 77.

were major motifs overlaid of the prophetic. Collingwood's classification, however, is somewhat arbitrary, as there is an overlapping of methods used by the prophets. His classification best serves as one of convenience.

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separately in the following sections of this chapter.

### III. THE PROPHET'S GENERAL TASK

The prophet's general task was spokesman for God to man.<sup>18</sup> He was the mouthpiece of the deity, the instrument of divine direction in the history of mankind,<sup>19</sup> one into whom the divine spirit was believed to have entered. Skinner defines the task of mediator as the "seismograph of providence." The earthquake analogy refers to the diagnostic and often corrective aspects of providence, which formed a large part of the prophetic oracle.<sup>20</sup>

The spokesman is also an interpreter. The prophet's spokesmanship included an interpretation of the world in terms of religion. As J. M. P. Smith puts it, he "interpreted the history of his time in terms of God religion."<sup>21</sup> The prophet was a herald. Sensing the critical nature of the times, he gave warning. He tried to awaken his people to the seriousness of the situation, and to arouse them to repentance as a means of salvation.<sup>22</sup>

### IV. THE PROPHET'S INSPIRATION

The prophet's spokesmanship for God to man was

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18. Knudson, Prophetic Movement in Israel, p. 30.

19. R. B. Y. Scott, "Prophecy," Ferm, The Encyclopedia of Religion, p. 614.

20. Skinner, op. cit., p. 38.

21. J. M. P. Smith, Prophet and His Times, p. 263.  
(Bracket inclosures, my own.)

22. Leslie, The Prophets Tell Their Own Story, p. 175.

separately in the following sections of this chapter.

#### III. THE PROPHET'S WORKING TIME

The prophet's working time was speaking for God to man. It was the expression of the deity, the instrument of divine direction in the history of mankind. It was the divine spirit who believed to have entered. It was the task of the prophet as the "instrument of providence." The prophet's working time was the significant and often corrective aspects of providence, as he turned a large part of the prophetic message.

The prophet is also an interpreter. The prophet's spokespersonship involved an interpretation of the world in terms of religion. As J. W. D. Smith says, he "interpreted the history of his time in terms of God's religion." The prophet was a herald. Bearing the critical message of the times, he gave warning. He tried to awaken his people to the seriousness of the situation, and to arouse them to repentance as a means of salvation.

#### IV. THE PROPHET'S LEGITIMATION

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1. Isaiah, Prophecy in Israel, p. 30.
2. J. W. D. Smith, "The Prophet," p. 31.
3. Isaiah, Prophecy in Israel, p. 31.
4. Isaiah, Prophecy in Israel, p. 31.
5. Isaiah, Prophecy in Israel, p. 31.
6. Isaiah, Prophecy in Israel, p. 31.
7. Isaiah, Prophecy in Israel, p. 31.
8. Isaiah, Prophecy in Israel, p. 31.
9. Isaiah, Prophecy in Israel, p. 31.
10. Isaiah, Prophecy in Israel, p. 31.



believed to function through inspiration. The Greek word for inspiration is literally "God breathed." The prophet communicated the message which God had "breathed" into his soul.

As the Roman sibyl, the prophet considered himself the physical channel used by the deity for communication to men. The primitive prophet felt God had entered his body and was speaking through his mouth.<sup>23</sup> The Hebrew prophet also considered his inspiration the mouth piece of God. This conception allowed the prophet to be conscious of his part in the oracle. His impression of the divine presence was often so intense that he identified himself with the deity, and spoke his oracle in the first person singular.

Prophetic inspiration was believed the result of a mysterious force which was accomplished in a supernatural way.<sup>24</sup> The prophet Micah described this force by asserting, "Truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord . . . to declare unto Jacob."<sup>25</sup> The personality of the prophet, though usually a factor in the inspiration of the higher prophets, remained in the background. The prophet was persuaded that for the time being he was the mouth piece of the deity and voiced this belief by his subsequent, "Thus saith the Lord."

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23. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 175.

24. Koenig, "Prophecy," Hastings, op. cit., Vol. 10. pp. 384-88.

25. Micah 3:8.

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<sup>23</sup> Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 175.  
<sup>24</sup> Koels, "Prophecy," Hastings, op. cit., Vol. 10, pp. 334-33.  
<sup>25</sup> Micah 3:8.



The methods which inspiration may assume vary with the age and culture. The Hebrew prophets received their inspiration primarily through mystical impressions and visions. Their less gifted colleagues relied more on dreams, omens and the mantic possession of physical ecstasy.<sup>26</sup> The Mohammedans recognize three forms of inspiration. In the highest state exemplified in Mohammed's reception of the Koran, the prophet's personality is completely in the background, and each word that he speaks is directly from the deity. In the next form the mind alone is inspired. The verbal formulation is the work of the prophet. The third mode of inspiration is divine guidance of the prophet's mental activities.<sup>27</sup>

Inspiration in ancient India corresponds to the highest form of Mohammedan inspiration. The rishis saw in visions the text of the Vedas, and then transcribed it for the people. The guru, an inspired Hindu teacher, was believed to be an incarnation of the deity. Every utterance contained the literal word of God.<sup>28</sup>

The prophet received his inspiration when his conscious mind was at rest. In this passive condition the prophet was receptive to influences from the other dimensions of his mind. Hickman believes that the capacity for

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26. Battenwieser, The Prophets of Israel, p. 139.

27. Koenig, "Prophecy," Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

28. Braden, "Guru," Ferm, *op. cit.*, p. 315.





inspiration is inborn, and that it may be developed through religious culture.<sup>29</sup> A constitutional capacity for inspiration could be, in part, the prophetic gift. It is a natural endowment which has matured through the influences of spiritual exercises. This assertion will be developed in the future chapters of this thesis.

The inspiration of the prophet is similar to the inspiration of the poet, the artist and the genius. Lyttleton believes inspiration is a product of the super-conscious mind. The quality of the inspiration is conditioned by the capacity of the conscious mind which receives it.<sup>30</sup>

Inspiration according to Hickman can be interpreted psychologically as intuition. Inspiration is an intuitive process functioning through the "wisdom of instinct." Intuition is a demonstration of the total ability of an individual to adjust to his surroundings. It functions before reason, and not without it. Reason puts into effect what intuition began.<sup>31</sup>

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29. Hickman, op. cit., p. 537.

30. Lyttleton, Our Superconscious Mind, p. 181.

31. Hickman, op. cit., p. 536.





## V. THE PROPHET'S SPECIFIC TASK

The prophet's general task had specific forms for its expression. His mediation was carried out through different channels. These channels included preaching and teaching, predicting the future and working wonders.

a. Preaching and Teaching. The spoken oracle to be efficacious could not be a mere recitation of words. It had to be spoken to people (mediation) and spoken effectively. To meet this need the prophet became a preacher and a teacher. The Hebrew prophet was primarily a preacher.<sup>32</sup> His oracles were delivered in sermonic fashion, with homiletical outline and spiritual fervor.

The Indian prophet was primarily a teacher. The rather mild and dispassionate character of his culture, his usual contemplative temperament and the mystical, pacifistic and fatalistic beliefs of many of the Hindu groups, explain his emphasis upon teaching rather than preaching. He lacked the intense emotional reaction to sin that characterized the preaching prophets.<sup>33</sup> The Hebrew prophet's passionate indignation against sin made his oracle a sermon. Though he was first of all a preacher, he was also a teacher.

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32. Knudson, Prophetic Movement in Israel, p. 157.

33. C. S. Braden, "Hinduism," *Ferm*, op. cit., pp. 337-339.





The great principle of his teaching and preaching was the moral order of the world.<sup>34</sup> He believed that man's moral nature was subject to laws as inviolable as the natural laws. The prophet's belief in moral law will be discussed in a later section of this chapter. His preaching and teaching were related to the religious cultus. Rather than teaching the rites of the worship ritual, as the priest, the prophet extracted the spiritual truths which underlay these ritualistic patterns.<sup>35</sup>

b. Predicting the Future. Prophecy, in modern parlance, is synonymous with foretelling the future. Although this usage is inaccurate it illustrates the importance that prediction occupied in the function of prophecy. Rowley believes prediction to be the mark of prophecy.<sup>36</sup> Prophetic prediction was both conditional and unconditional.

Conditional prediction was dependent upon the unalterable cause and effect of the moral law. The prophet "saw the life of men in the light of his vision of God," and understood the inevitable outcome of that life, and having proclaimed that outcome, pleaded with the people to avoid it by changing their living.<sup>37</sup>

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34. Davidson, op. cit., p. 108.

35. Ibid., p. 109.

36. Rowley, op. cit., p. 35.

37. Ibid., p. 38.





Leslie's Micah states, "With these conditions . . . [sinful] . . . Yah, moral being that he is, could only do one thing to his people."<sup>38</sup> The prediction was based upon the moral character of the situation. If something intervened which changed the morality of the situation, the prophet's prediction was also changed.

*Jezebel*  
 When ~~King Ahab~~ <sup>for Ahab,</sup> had Naboth killed to secure his vineyard, the prophet Elijah prophesied to ~~him~~ <sup>Ahab</sup> that in the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, they would also lick up Ahab's blood. The horror of the prophetic oracle so affected Ahab that he repented. He, temporarily at least, changed his way of living. The result was that Elijah received a new revelation. His former prediction against Ahab would not transpire.<sup>39</sup>

The moral condition in prophetic prediction was recognized by the people. If the moral condition changed so that the prophecy was not fulfilled, they understood the reason and never questioned the authority of the prophet.<sup>40</sup> Jerome believed that these predictions were given as warnings, in hope that they would not be fulfilled.<sup>41</sup> The prediction was often a homiletical method to make his preaching effective in the present.<sup>42</sup>

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38. Leslie, op. cit., p. 151.

39. I Kings 21: 19-29.

40. Farrar, The Minor Prophets, p. 124.

41. Knudson, Prophetic Movement in Israel, p. 161.

42. J. M. P. Smith, Prophet and His Problems, p. 101.





The prophet also predicted unconditionally. This assertion is contested by Scott who says, "The predictive element in prophecy is incidental, not primary; it extends the margin of the moral and religious present into a future which is its immediate consequence, and is morally conditioned."<sup>43</sup> Scott's interpretation of prophetic prediction, in excluding entirely unconditional prediction, does violence to the primary records of prophecy, and is probably based on the assumption that an unconditional prediction is impossible since it can not be rationally explained. Speaking as a scientist, Rhine declares that "science knows no impossibles and theory must always conform to evidence."<sup>44</sup> The science of parapsychology is experimenting with the possibility of unconditional prediction termed "precognition," and the evidence obtained is definitely positive, as will be shown in the following chapter. These predictions did not nullify man's free will. The conditional element was always implied. The prophecy was unconditional in that the prophet foresaw that the condition would not materialize. Jeremiah prophesied the doom of Jerusalem. He knew that the genuine penitence of the people would avert the destruction, yet he was also aware that no such penitence was forthcoming.

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43. R. B. Y. Scott, "Prophecy," *Ferm*, op. cit., p.615.

44. Rhine, Reach Of the Mind, p. 66.





He saw no hope.<sup>45</sup> Rhine calls this unconditional prophecy or precognition, "the strangest of human powers." Commenting on its conception as miraculous in every civilization in which it has been practised, he goes on to say:

Invariably and in all ages men have been awe-struck by the power of the prophet to dip into the future and to herald events that the cleverest reasoning could not reliably infer from existing knowledge . . . whatever prophecy has been accepted, it has been held by the people to be not of this world, but divine or supernatural.<sup>46</sup>

The prophet found in his ability "to lift the veil of the future" the proof which he needed to convince his contemporaries of the divine nature of his mission.<sup>47</sup> The "true" prophet defied the "false" prophet by challenging him to a duel of predicting. The prophet whose predictions were confirmed was the true prophet.<sup>48</sup>

c. Working Wonders. The prophet is credited with many remarkable feats. Those of healing are outstanding. Healing powers were expected with mediation, because of the ancient association of healing with divine intervention. Wonders which reveal the prophet's control of the elements are also numerous. When Elisha wished to prove to himself that he had received a double part of Elijah's spirit, he attempted to perform the same wonder which Elijah

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45. Skinner, op. cit., p. 87.

46. Rhine, The Reach Of the Mind, p. 65.

47. Orelli, op. cit., p. 7.

48. Loc. cit.

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45. Skinner, op. cit., p. 37.  
46. Kline, The Search of the Mind, p. 65.  
47. Grell, op. cit., p. 7.  
48. loc. cit.



had previously worked. He stood on the banks of the Jordan river and lashed the waters with the prophetic mantle he had received from Elijah to determine whether the waters would part for him as he had seen them part for Elijah.<sup>49</sup>

Akhilananda relates the ability of Ramakrishna to transfer spontaneously the spirit of superconscious realization to his disciples.<sup>50</sup> It was generally believed that the prophets had the paranormal ability to transfer the prophetic spirit spontaneously to others.

The purpose of these feats was often to convince the prophet's adversaries that he was a mediator of the deity, and consequently, impervious to threats or bribes from mere human powers.<sup>51</sup>

## VI. THE PROPHET'S RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

Though the prophet was an influential leader in his culture, he was not alone in that capacity, nor was he the only religious leader. The priest, the sage and the ruler shared these positions of leadership with the prophet. The prophet's relationship with the priest was often a dynamic influence in creating the nature of the prophet's mission.

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49. II Kings 2:14.

50. Akhilananda, Hindu Psychology, p. 195.

51. C. F. Keil, F. J. Delitsch, Commentary on the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1872), Vol. 9. p. 327.





The priest was identified with the worship cultus of the temple or shrine. Being the leader of the cultus, he was a mediator between his people and God. His mediation, however, was usually one in which he simply performed a fixed ritual pattern. In Israel he inherited his position and performed his mediation through offering sacrifices and divining with the urim and thummin. The latter were used only occasionally and then only on national issues. They were used to indicate a choice between one of two stated alternatives.<sup>52</sup> These similarities related the offices of priest and prophet in many cultures where the prophet did not rise to the stature of free spontaneous mediation as he did in Israel.

Mowinckel and Aubrey Johnson follow a cultic prophets theory which identifies both prophet and priest as joint officials in a shrine. They point to Samuel who presided at a sacrificial meal at a shrine,<sup>53</sup> and also to the sons of the prophets mentioned in connection with places of known shrines. In evaluating this theory I would agree with Rowley that we must be cautious in connecting the prophets in as official capacities as the priests at shrines, but must also realize that they were often associated with cultic centers.<sup>54</sup> The cultic prophets theory is too extreme in

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52. Robinson, op. cit., p. 29.

53. I Sam. 9:11-14.

54. Rowley, op. cit., pp. 14-16.





the association of priest and prophet; so Bade is extreme in their disassociation. Believing that the prophets unequivocally repudiated the sacrificial system, he dogmatically states that there were two religions in Israel, that of the prophets and that of the priests, and that the prophets from Amos to Jeremiah denied any intrinsic value to the use of ritual in worship.<sup>55</sup>

Originally, even in Israel, the prophet and priest were of one accord. They had mediative functions and performed them from like motivations.<sup>56</sup> The difference in their function was that the priest was more of an intercessor for men to God, while the prophet was God's inspired spokesman to the people. There is good reason to believe that Samuel, whom many consider the first prophet in Israel in the full sense of the word, also functioned as a priest.<sup>57</sup> Nathan the prophet and Zadok the high priest jointly anointed Solomon, King of Israel.<sup>58</sup>

The estrangement between the two offices came with the degeneration of the priesthood. The prophet Hosea charges the priests with lewd living,<sup>59</sup> the prophet Zephaniah of polluting the sanctuary,<sup>60</sup> the prophet Micah

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55. Bade, The Old Testament in the Light of Today, pp. 281-284.

56. Kaplan, op. cit., p. 49.

57. Keil, op. cit., p. 17.

58. I Kings 1:34.

59. Hosea 6:9.

60. Zeph. 3:4.





of being mercenary.<sup>61</sup> The center of religion for the priest became the temple built with hands instead of the temple of the human soul. He considered man's chief obligation to glorify God in the temple.<sup>62</sup> The priest lost sight of the religious importance of ethical living. He neglected this ethical emphasis both in his mediation and in his personal life. Though there were undoubtedly many exceptions, the majority of priests appear to have followed this trend.

The prophet protested against the temple-centered religion of the priests. This protest led many scholars to believe that he was opposed to the sacrifice.<sup>63</sup> What the prophet opposed was the popular conception of the sacrifice.<sup>64</sup> He objected to the type of sacrifice that he saw in his culture.<sup>65</sup>

He objected to the sacrifice as the cultus of his day had abused it, because he objected to any use of forms in worship ritual which substituted for ethical living. The sacred shrine, in Israel the temple, was believed to have a type of magical value in protecting the worshipper from harm.<sup>66</sup> The prophet recognized no religious ritual or

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61. Micah 3:11.

62. Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

63. Bade, *op. cit.*, p. 290.

64. Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

65. Guillaume, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

66. Bade, *op. cit.*, p. 264.





object as of any value apart from the ethical life. "He stood for the enthronement of conscience in religion."<sup>67</sup> Samuel, who himself offered many sacrifices, expressed the prophet's point of view when he rebuked King Saul for sacrificing before the appointed time. Said Samuel, "Obedience is better than sacrifice."<sup>68</sup>

The prophet accepted the forms of worship, and even advocated them as aids to worship.<sup>69</sup> What they condemned was the use of these forms as substitutes for moral obedience.<sup>70</sup>

Some of the Hebrew prophets were also priests. Among them were Jeremiah and Ezekiel.<sup>71</sup> After the return of the Hebrews from the Exile, the conflict between the prophet and priest seemed to be over, and the prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi urged the rebuilding of the temple and the observance of the temple ritual.<sup>72</sup>

The sages of antiquity, like the prophets and priests, had their two levels. There were the tradition bound transmitters of the wisdom of the past. They, like the stultified priest and prophet, contributed little or nothing to

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67. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 88.

68. I Sam. 15:22.

69. Jere. 33:18.

70. Knudson, Prophetic Movement in Israel, p. 108.

71. Jere. 1:1, Ezek. 1:3.

72. S. H. Hooke, Prophets and Priests (London: Thos. Murphy & Co., 1938), p. 48.





their office. It was the higher level of the sage, the original thinking, deep searching philosopher who corresponded to the classical prophet. With him the prophet cooperated. They were both free from any bonds of tradition, and emphasized the moral concept of God and the expansion of the ethical code.<sup>73</sup> The sage and the prophet differed somewhat in their emphasis. The sage functioned from a universal point of view, and the prophet, as a rule, from a national point of view.<sup>74</sup>

The prophet's relationship to the rulers of his tribe or nation was that of counselor. The prophet insisted upon his right to communicate the will of God to the rulers, and the rulers as a whole respected this right. The prophet's influence in the affairs of state was often great. When the rebellion separated Israel into two divisions, and the king and army were planning to crush the rebellion, Shenaiah, the prophet, walked into the counsel room and forbade the venture, stating that the division was the will of God. There was no attack.<sup>75</sup>

When an egotistical despotic ruler failed to follow the prophet's counsel, the prophet became his judge, and denounced him fearlessly for his failure to obey the deity.

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73. R. H. Pfeiffer, "The Growth of Old Testament Religion," reprinted from The Shane Quarterly, January 1947.

74. W. R. Harper, The Prophetic Element in the Old Testament (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1905), p.20.

75. II Chron. 11:2.





These ancient tyrants who would have had the head of any other who spoke half so reproachfully, often respected the judgment, and mended their ways. Occasionally the prophet was punished. Micaiah and Jeremiah were imprisoned, and Elijah had to flee the country. These were exceptional instances, provoked by extreme hatred or national stress.

The prophet on occasion selected the ruler. Samuel selected and annointed both Saul and David. Ahijah annointed Jeroboam king of the northern kingdom of Israel before the revolution occurred. One of the sons of the prophets under Elisha's direction, annointed Jehu, when Joram was yet on the throne. The prophet functioned in this capacity only when he felt divinely ordered to do so.

## VII. THE PROPHET'S REVELATION

The prophet believed that his message was revealed to him by the divine spirit or spirits. The people for whom he mediated accepted his message as a revelation from the deity. Its origin was not the prophet's mind, but the deity which was using his personality as its medium of communication.

Due to the nature of their position all prophets were recipients of revelation.<sup>76</sup> His prophetic call was

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76. James, op. cit., p. 467.





usually a revelation experience.<sup>77</sup> The oracles of the Old and New Testament were considered revelation by both the prophets and the people who heard them. The writer of the first book of Samuel commented that the word of the Lord was scarce before Samuel's time because there had been no "open vision."<sup>78</sup>

When the prophet recorded his oracles, he was preserving his revelation for posterity. Though written revelation was frequently spoken before it was recorded, some of it was written immediately upon reception. In this latter group are the Koran, the Book of Mormon, and the Vedas. All three are believed by their adherents to be the literal words of God.

There are many ways of receiving revelation. Israel recognized only two of these forms, the priestly and prophetic oracles.<sup>79</sup> The Quaker, George Fox, experienced revelation through what he described as "openings."<sup>80</sup> Mohammed believed he heard a knell, as from a bell, in the presence of an angel, and when the angel departed, he had received his revelation. At other times he claimed to receive revelation through actual conversation with the angel. The Mormon

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77. Kaplan, op. cit., p. 112-13.

78. I Sam. 3:1.

79. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 50.

80. James, op. cit., p. 472.





prophet, Joseph Smith, claimed that he received the Book of Mormon written on golden plates from an angel. He supposedly translated these plates by the aid of "peep stones." These were probably used in the fashion of crystal gazing.<sup>81</sup>

It was the content of revelation rather than the way in which it was received that made religious history. The prophetic oracles are still studied with benefit, and they contain the truths of the spirit of man which are timeless. St. Ignatius believed he received more knowledge through revelation in a period of meditation than he did from all his teachers.<sup>82</sup>

There have been attempts to explain revelation psychologically. James believed revelation was received from the "subliminal" region of the mind--the region below the threshold of consciousness. Those who receive revelation, he believes, have an unusually wide entry into this region, with the result that influences from the subliminal are able to make strong impressions both on the prophet and on religious history.<sup>83</sup>

Hickman believes the prophet had a sensitive religious insight which enabled him to receive spiritual impressions which escape those less sensitive. Revelation which can be

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81. Ibid., pp. 471-72. "

82. Ibid., p. 401.

83. Ibid., p. 473.





explained in terms of this higher psychic registration, he believes, can be psychologically defended.<sup>84</sup>

In any explanation of revelation the prophet's highly developed mental powers cannot be overlooked. He recognized divine purpose in the social structure. This belief plus his understanding of history and his acutely diagnostic mind equipped the prophet to shape and direct his revelation to meet the needs of his day and ours.<sup>85</sup>

### VIII. THE PROPHET AS AN APOCALYPTIST

The apocalypse is a common form of oriental literature. The oriental specializes in figures and symbols in his speech and writing. When the figurative imagery describes divine intervention in the world in a mysterious and supernatural manner, it is an apocalypse.<sup>86</sup> Knudson believes prophecy and apocalypse to be interchangeable, the prophet often being an apocalypticist, especially when his prophecy was eschatological.<sup>87</sup> Pfeiffer believes they are not interchangeable.<sup>88</sup> An examination of the records shows that while much of prophecy is not apocalyptic, many of the prophets have their apocalyptic prophecies.

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84. Hickman, op. cit., p. 530.

85. Ibid., p. 533.

86. Knudson, Prophetic Movement in Israel, p. 60.

87. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 52.

88. Written criticism by the second reader, R. H. Pfeiffer, on the first draft of the dissertation.





The prophet's eschatology abounded in supernatural symbolism. He saw God entering into the last days of the earth with judgment and power, accompanied by signs and wonders of nature. The use of the symbol is prevalent among those who seek communion with the spiritual world. Mystical contemplation among prophets, mystics, mediums and worshippers is characterized by the symbol.<sup>89</sup> His wide use of the symbolic name and the symbolic acts denotes the prophet's apocalyptic tendency.<sup>90</sup> Hosea named his children symbolically. Their names were "Loruhamah," which means "that hath not obtained mercy," and "Loammi," which means "not my people."<sup>91</sup> The symbolic seige enacted by Ezekial is a drastic example of the degree to which this prophetic symbolism was carried. The prophet was directed in his revelation to portray the seige of Jerusalem upon a piece of tile. He built little forts, camps, and battery rams to portray the coming calamity. He placed himself on war rations and laid before that minature seige for three hundred and ninety days before his fellow captives in Babylon, and then laid upon his other side for forty more days.<sup>92</sup>

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89. Leuba, The Psychology of Religious Mysticism, p. 170.

90. Koenig, "Prophecy," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 10, pp. 384-90.

91. Hosea 1:6,9.

92. Ezek. 4.





Agabus, the New Testament prophet, used the symbolic act in prophecy when he predicted the imprisonment of Paul. He took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet with it. After this dramatization he prophesied that in such a manner would the owner of the girdle be bound in the near future.<sup>93</sup>

Wheeler Robinson contends that these acts were not merely illustrations of the prophet's message, but were messages in themselves--that the Hebrew did not differentiate between word and act as does our Occidental culture. He also differentiates between prophetic symbolism and magic.

Magic is the attempt to control events by a technique which constrains the spiritual powers, whereas the prophetic symbolism is the control of events through the technique by the God whose constraint is the source of the symbol.<sup>94</sup>

#### IX. THE PROPHET'S BELIEF IN A MORAL LAW

The prophet recognized moral purpose in the universe. His belief in the ethical nature of the universe was the measure of his cause and effect in world history.<sup>95</sup> The prophet realized that "the distance between the human and

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93. Acts 21:10-11.

94. Rowley, "The Nature Of Prophecy In the Light Of Recent Study," Harvard Theological Review, p. 28.

95. Kaplan, Psychology of Prophecy, p. 97.





the divine is a moral one."<sup>96</sup> For this reason his prophecy is an appeal to the religiously educated conscience.<sup>97</sup>

The prophet denounced those who broke this moral law. His condemnation of the neighboring religions and their influence in his own land was caused by the immoral aspects of their worship cultus. Worship that was morally false was by that very fact, idolatry.<sup>98</sup> The idolatries of Israel which drew the judgmental fervor of the prophets were morally degrading.<sup>99</sup> The motivation of Mohammed's revelation was partly caused by his distress over the unethical practices in his land.<sup>100</sup> The ancient Persian prophet, Zoroaster, in his Gathas finds both wisdom and justice in Ahura, the deity, and promises blessings to those who are submissive to this wise spirit, and "unheeded words" to those who through wickedness destroy the creatures of justice.<sup>101</sup>

Using his moral measurement of cause and effect the prophet discovered the major conflict of life--what is versus what ought to be.<sup>102</sup> If the ethical code was broken, the prophet expected trouble. This was the only sign he

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96. Battenwieser, The Prophets of Israel, p. 326.

97. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 88.

98. W. R. Smith, The Prophets of Israel, p. 177.

99. Cohon, op. cit., p. 22.

100. Johnson, "Mohammedanism," Ferm, op. cit., p. 500.

101. M. W. Smith, Studies in the Syntax of the Gathas of Zarathustra, Together with Text, Translation, and Notes. (Philadelphia: Linguistic Society of America, 1929), p. 74.

102. Hamilton, The Prophets of Israel, p. 102.





needed. In the height of Israel's prosperity, Amos predicted its doom because of its immoralities.<sup>103</sup> To the prophet calamity was the evidence of divine retribution for breaking the universal laws of loyalty, love and kindness.<sup>104</sup>

The conflict between the status quo and the ideal has been recognized by serious minded individuals of all ages.<sup>105</sup> They were as aware of moral cause and effect as they were of natural law. The French Revolution, preceded by flagrant abuse of human rights, was prophesied by many prophets. Foremost of these was Cozotte.<sup>106</sup> Prophecies of the destruction of Rome and the papacy by religious prophets were numerous for a period of over a thousand years due to the libertine living of that city.<sup>107</sup>

## X. THE HEBREW PROPHET

Religious prophecy attained its peak in Israel. The Hebrew prophet is the outstanding prophet in religious history. The Hebrew prophet will be studied under the themes of his uniqueness, his character, his jealousy for Yahweh,

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103. Gordon, The Prophets of the Old Testament, p.39.

104. J. M. P. Smith, Prophet and His Problems, p.165:  
W. R. Smith, The Prophets of Israel, p. 135.

105. Leslie, The Prophets Tell Their Own Story, p.79.

106. Forman, The Story of Prophecy, p. 233.

107. Ibid., p. 107.





his optimism, his progressive spirit and his statesmanship.

a. His Uniqueness. The Hebrew prophet differed from the prophets of other cultures. He wore the distinctive prophet's mantle which distinguished him upon sight.<sup>108</sup> Guillaume believes he had little or nothing in common with the Babylonian and Assyrian diviners.<sup>109</sup> These diviners had priestly functions and were associated with the shrine cultus.<sup>110</sup> According to Koenig there were no prophets of the character of the Hebrew prophets in Babylon, Assyria, Egypt or among the Mohammedans.<sup>111</sup> While in Babylon Daniel was called "master of the magicians" by King Nebuchadnezzar, for he said, "The spirit of the holy gods is in him."<sup>112</sup>

The oracles of the Hebrew prophets had moral fervor. In contrast, the Greek oracles were usually objective amoral replies to alternative questions.<sup>113</sup> The Hebrew prophet's oracles were not ambiguous as so often were the Greek oracles and those of other cultures. The mission of the Hebrew prophet depended upon the absolute clarity of his message. The prophet endeavored to eliminate any semblance of doubt

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108. II Sam. 28:14.

109. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination, p. 108.

110. J. M. P. Smith, Prophet and His Problems, p. 11.

111. Koenig, "Prophecy," Hastings, op. cit., Vol. 10, pp. 392-3.

112. Dan. 4:9.

113. John Cournos, A Book of Prophecy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), p. 145.





in what he spoke for Yahweh.<sup>114</sup>

The ecstasy of Yahweh's prophet differed from that of many other prophets. He retained consciousness of himself in ecstasy. The Semite was conscious of an abyss of separation between God and man, and consequently this consciousness prevented an ecstatic goal of union with the divine.<sup>115</sup> The Neoplatonist, Hindu and Muslim schools of mystics and prophets believed that to lose consciousness through union with the divine was the goal of divine human communication.<sup>116</sup> The Mohammedan, Al Ghazali, said that the highest state of communion with God resulted in consciousness only of the divine--to become completely immersed in the mystical experience.<sup>117</sup> Plato's belief that inspired divination was not attained by anyone in his full senses, has no application to the great Hebrew prophets.<sup>118</sup>

His retention of his self-consciousness in his ecstasy also differentiates the Hebrew prophet from the Yogi. The Vedantist belief is that the highest form of mystical union is to become identical with the deity.<sup>119</sup> The goal of Yoga

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114. Forman, op. cit., p. 74.

115. Hölscher, Die Propheten, pp. 23-24.

116. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 294.

117. Ibid., p. 318.

118. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 40.

119. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, p. 410.





is the loss of consciousness in union with the divine--  
a state called nirvikalpa samadhi.<sup>120</sup>

Many of the Christian mystics were also unconscious of their own individuality in their rapture with God. St. John of the Cross called the highest state of mysticism a union of love, where imagery was entirely lacking and verbal description impossible.<sup>121</sup>

Though Hines compares prophetic activity to mysticism, the prophet, unlike the mystic who became absorbed in God, felt himself used by God, as though he were an extension of the divine personality. Instead of losing himself in experiencing God as does the mystic, the prophet entered into God's experience, so that he shared the divine pathos. His mediation came through his participating personality, not by the suspension of his personality.<sup>122</sup>

The Hebrew prophet resisted the magical and divining methods of his neighboring soothsayers.<sup>123</sup> Information obtained through crystal gazers and omen interpreters, or through magical enchanter's was never considered revelation from Yahweh.<sup>124</sup> Even when his methods appeared similar to the neighboring augurs, the revelation of the Hebrew prophet relied solely on the prophet's consciousness of a word from

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120. Akhilananda, Hindu Psychology, p. 164.

121. James, op. cit., p. 398.

122. Rowley, op. cit., pp. 27-30.

123. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 243.

124. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament,  
p. 50.





Yahweh.<sup>125</sup>

Condemning Babylonian prophets Isaiah wrote,  
Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the  
multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast  
labored from thy youth, if so be thou shalt be able  
to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art  
wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let  
now the astrologers, the star gazers, the monthly  
prognosticators, stand up and save thee from these  
things that shall come upon thee.<sup>126</sup>

The recognized forms of revelation in Israel are  
mentioned by the historian in describing the plight of King  
Saul. He could receive no message from Yahweh even though  
he sought it by dreams, by the urim and thummim and by  
the prophets.<sup>127</sup> It was spiritual prophecy that counted  
in Israel and which occupied the place that divination held  
in other religions.<sup>128</sup>

Kaplan believes that the Hebrew prophet merely sub-  
limated magic and divination. The magician sought to ward  
off danger by his incantations; the prophet sought the same  
immunity by means of righteousness and obedience to Yahweh.<sup>129</sup>  
The comparison is stretched to the degree that it is not  
convincing. If righteous living is a substitute for magic  
simply because we believe it is the trick that mechanically  
gets results magic ceases to be primitive and becomes the  
acme of intelligent behavior.

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125. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 147.

126. Isaiah 47: 12-14.

127. I Sam. 28:6.

128. Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, p. 5.

129. Kaplan, op. cit., p. 59.





The lone Hebrew prophet occupied a distinct place in religious prophecy. He separated from the group prophets when he believed that they had either betrayed the word of God or were ignorant of it. The group prophets who attached themselves to the court of the monarch were similar to the priest prophets of the neighboring countries. The lone prophet protested against the oracles of the court prophets and the rulers who encouraged them. He frequently believed himself to be the sole representative of Yahweh in Israel.<sup>130</sup> Elijah fleeing from Queen Jezebel lamented that he only of Yahweh's prophets remained in Israel, and that he was in danger of being eliminated.<sup>131</sup>

Kaplan's contention that the Hebrew prophet differed only in degree and not in kind from the prophets of other cultures, is not verified by an unprejudiced analysis.<sup>132</sup> His determination to interpret everything by the principles of the rigid science of his day, forced him to fit all cases into his rationalistic mold whether they actually belonged there or not. Any investigation which distorts the data from primary sources to fit a system of thought is begging the question. If the products of the Hebrew prophets differ only in "degree" and not in "kind" from those other prophets, then the "degree" is of such a large dimension that it is

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130. Hooke, Prophets and Priests, p. 18.

131. I Kings 19:14.

132. Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. 55.





indistinguishable from "kind."

The Hebrew prophet was unique because he spoke for a unique God.<sup>133</sup> The character of Yahweh was a contrast to the gods of the prophets of other civilizations.<sup>134</sup> Yahweh was not a mere metaphysical entity; he was a living personal power. Though the Hebrew prophet may not always have received his God's message in different ways from his neighbors, he did receive vastly different messages.<sup>135</sup>

b. His Character. The Hebrew prophet's character was ethically unapproachable. It was necessary that the prophet have a moral character in order to insure the ethical use of his gifts. Those who possessed paranormal cognition and lacked ethical standards have often used that cognition for purposes of exploitation. The prophet placed himself last. An ancient test for the genuine prophet was that he never used his office for personal advantages.<sup>136</sup> Though he believed himself the called representative of Yahweh, he never considered himself to have any part in the divine. In humility he counted himself as nothing before the glory of Yahweh. His desire and message was that Yahweh's will be done on earth.<sup>137</sup>

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133. W. R. Smith, op. cit., p. 53.

134. Gordon, The Prophets of the Old Testament, p.5.

135. W. R. Smith, op. cit., pp. 57-63.

136. Hooke, op. cit., p. 61.

137. Hamilton, op. cit., pp. 191-93.





His message was of prime importance. His own person was subservient to it. If his own convenience hindered an effective message it had to be foregone.<sup>138</sup> Jeremiah voluntarily doomed himself to a wretched existence when he accepted the responsibility of being Yahweh's spokesman. It meant that he had to prophesy the conquest of his own nation and to advocate submission to the enemy.

Mary Jenness has written a book entitled, Men Who Stood Alone.<sup>139</sup> It contains the stories of the prophets of Israel. Though prophet, priest, sage and king were against him, the prophet of Yahweh unflinchingly clung to his conviction. He stood alone.

Some observers of the prophet see in this stand a desire for inconvenience. Forman writes of the prophet's "penchant for courting inconvenience,"<sup>140</sup> and Hamilton, of the prophet's instinctive taking upon himself whatever difficult task there was to be done.<sup>141</sup> Though this is one diagnostic interpretation of the prophet's difficult mission, I believe it has only slight application to the Hebrew prophet. He acted in spite of consequences, not because he had an affinity for the hard way, but because he felt so

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138. J. M. P. Smith, Prophet and His Problems, p.133.

139. Mary Jenness, Men Who Stood Alone (New York: Ray Long & Richard R. Smith Inc., 1932).

140. Forman, op. cit., p. 106.

141. Hamilton, op. cit., p. 100.





identified with Yahweh's cause that consequences did not matter. He did not wait to see if his way was clear. That would have hindered the immediate effect of his message. When he received his communication he spoke, he acted.<sup>142</sup>

He paid a heavy price for his distinction.<sup>143</sup> The isolation and reproach which he endured could not have been motivated solely by a sense of duty.<sup>144</sup> When an anonymous prophet appeared before the high priest Eli and denounced his execution of that office, it was not only because he felt obligated to do so.<sup>145</sup> His conduct was too novel, too unexpected, to be a duty. He was motivated by a sense of devotion to Yahweh and to the religion of Yahweh which he saw being abused by Eli's sons. The Hebrew prophet's primary motivation for the execution of his office was his love for his God.<sup>146</sup>

c. His Jealousy for Yahweh. After Elijah had won his contest with the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, he said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts."<sup>147</sup> This jealousy for the sole Godhead of Yahweh was characteristic of the Hebrew prophet.<sup>148</sup> He was jealous for Yahweh

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142. J. M. P. Smith, The Prophet and His Times, p. 139.

143. Battenwieser, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

144. Gordon, op. cit., p. 39.

145. I Sam. 2:27-29.

146. Loc. cit.

147. I Kings 19:10.

148. Davidson, Old Testament Prophecy, p. 40.





in the sense that he was emotionally aroused when Yahweh's people became unfaithful to him and were attracted to other gods. He recognized evil as arising from one source, apostasy from Yahweh.<sup>149</sup> Israel's immoralities were usually associated with their "whoring" after other gods.<sup>150</sup> The licentious rites of the neighboring religions contributed to the moral decay of those peoples. When the Israelites participated in these rites, they also became morally degenerate.<sup>151</sup>

The prophet was the spearhead of resistance against this foreign influence.<sup>152</sup> He saw how it was attacking the strength of his people. He knew that Yahweh was angry because of their infidelity. Jealousy for the glory of Yahweh moved the prophet to protest.<sup>153</sup> The tendency of the times was for religious syncretism. Worshipping one god in the cultus of another was not believed incongruous. The prophet was aware of the incongruity, and with heroic fidelity to his God, he fought the battle against syncretism.<sup>154</sup>

Because he was jealous for Yahweh, the prophet also raised his voice in political issues. He saw no help in a

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149. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 118.

150. Exodus 34:15.

151. W. R. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

152. Guillaume, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

153. Hooke, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

154. Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 27-33.





political intrigue which replaced faith in Yahweh.<sup>155</sup> He protested against alliances with other powers because these alliances implied recognition of other gods, and made impossible the complete submission of all parties to the will of Yahweh.<sup>156</sup> He rejected the belief of the times that Israel's prosperity could be effected solely by military might. Hosea's greatness according to Hamilton, is that he rejected the idea of anything as divine except righteousness and love.<sup>157</sup> Zechariah, in Battenwieser's translation, expressed the same thought when he wrote: "Not by virtue of material strength and political power shall ye prevail, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."<sup>158</sup>

d. His Religion of the Heart. Religion in the days of the Hebrew prophet had become closely identified with group participation and national significance. The Hebrew prophet emphasized the religion of the individual soul. He did not oppose corporate worship, but he wanted corporate worship to include the worship by the individual.<sup>159</sup> The primary essence of religion to the prophet was the relationship of the individual soul with Yahweh.<sup>160</sup> Jeremiah thought of religion as a natural turning to God, even as the

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155. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 153.

156. W. R. Smith, op. cit., p. 325.

157. Hamilton, op. cit., p. 85.

158. Battenwieser, op. cit., p. 3. (Zech. 4:6).

159. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 367.

160. Leslie, op. cit., p. 259.





birds respond to the change of the seasons.<sup>161</sup> Ezekiel explicitly defined his task as the care of individual souls.<sup>162</sup> To Amos, outward obedience in the temple sacrifice was meaningless unless it was accompanied by the inward obedience of the soul.<sup>163</sup> The prophetic movement in Israel emphasized personal piety.<sup>164</sup>

e. The Prophet's Optimism. The Hebrew prophet was essentially a preacher of hope. Though he often prophesied at low ebbs in his nation's life, and though he himself frequently predicted destruction for his nation, his ultimate message was the oracle of a better day. He believed the day was coming when the will of Yahweh would reign among the peoples of the earth. Zion, the hill on which the temple stood, was to be the center of this new world order.<sup>165</sup> The new kingdom would be initiated by a remarkable interposition of Yahweh.<sup>166</sup> There is disagreement among scholars whether these heralds of a coming kingdom referred to a spiritual reign of God in the human soul, or an earthly kingdom which would be the perfect Israel.

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161. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination, p. 344.

162. Ezek. 33: 7-16.

163. Hamilton, The Prophets of Israel, p. 43.  
Amos, 4.

164. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel, p. 195.

165. Battenwieser, The Prophets of Israel, p. 5.  
Micah, 4: 1-7.

166. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 193.  
Hab. 3: 1-16.





It is my opinion that the prophets did not exclude one or the other interpretation. An earthly kingdom where the will of Yahweh was perfectly done, would not be possible where the will of Yahweh did not reign in the soul.

The Messianic prophecies were specific instances of this exuberant optimism. The Messiah (Hebrew for "the anointed one") was a combination prophet, priest and king through whom the will of Yahweh was to function on earth. The Messiah's advent was a future event; he was to be the most illustrious heir to the kingly line of the great David.<sup>167</sup>

The prophet's optimism was anchored in his confidence that despite the threat of evil, goodness would ultimately triumph. He believed the love of Yahweh would be victor over all forms of hatred. It was his oracle from Yahweh that goodness would reign over the earth just as surely as goodness had its source in Yahweh.<sup>168</sup>

f. The Prophet, a Progressive. The Hebrew prophet was a progressive.<sup>169</sup> It is of interest in studying the Old Testament scholars that some of them believe the prophets conservative while others call them radical. The Hebrew prophet tested everything by the plummet line of

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167. Isaiah 9:7-8.

168. Hamilton, op. cit., p. 130.

169. Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, p. 50.





righteousness, and the result of that test determined his stand.<sup>170</sup> Some of his statements sound conservative because they held to principles or practices of the past. That his statements supported the past was irrelevant to the prophet; he supported them because they were righteous. Some of his statements on the other hand, sound radical, because they discarded traditional ways and customs. Again, that his statements discarded the past was irrelevant to the prophet; he made his statements because they were righteous. As J. M. P. Smith has said, he held the past with one hand and reached into the future with the other.<sup>171</sup>

Though he was a progressive the Hebrew prophet was not frequently an innovator. Harper states that the theology of Amos was new to his culture.<sup>172</sup> It is a psychological improbability that Amos or any other of the Hebrew prophets often propounded what they believed were new ideas. Their whole emphasis is on a return to tried and true standards and beliefs. If the prophets themselves believed their teaching was nothing new, it in all probability was not. They knew more about the times in which they lived than students two thousand years later. Prophecy rested on the foundation of the law of Israel. The

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<sup>170</sup>. Knudson, Prophetic Movement In Inrael, p. 112. Isaiah, 28:17.

<sup>171</sup>. J. M. P. Smith, Prophet and His Times, p. 263.

<sup>172</sup>. Harper, The Prophetic Element in the Old Testament, p. 101.





prophet was proclaiming that eternal law of God.<sup>173</sup> He was resisting the innovation of foreign religious ideas which contradicted those upon which his nation had been built.

g. The Prophet as a Statesman. In Israel the prophet was also a statesman. His whole life was bound up with his nation. He considered himself its spiritual guardian and was recognized as such by the people. The life of the state gave the prophet his prominence.<sup>174</sup> He agonized with the sorrows of his nation; he condemned its sins with the authority and fervor of Yahweh himself; he rejoiced in its good fortunes.

His guardianship was essential to Israel because he, if nobody else, perceived the difference between Israel as a political community and Israel as a spiritual community. He knew the contrast between the nation as a political unit and the nation as a unit of true religion. Not only was he aware of the difference, he recognized the breach that was separating the two.<sup>175</sup> Hence his protest. He was painfully conscious of Israel as it was and Israel as he believed Yahweh meant it to be.

The prophet at times rose above his national statesmanship to the role of an international prophet.<sup>176</sup> His

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173. Davidson, op. cit., p. 5.

174. J. M. P. Smith, Prophet and His Problems, p. 169.

175. W. R. Smith, op. cit., p. 275.

176. Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, p. 30.





moral sensitivity and belief in a purposive universe qualified him to speak authoritatively on the conduct and destiny of the nations of his day. His ultimate hope for all peoples was their submission to the will of Yahweh.

h. Sons of the Prophets. The sons of the prophets were groups of prophets who lived together in various communities throughout ancient Palestine. They often banded themselves around a leading prophet of the day. Moses, Samuel, Elijah and Elisha all had their emulative groups of disciples whom they taught in the prophetic function. The sons of the prophets appear never to have given the religious world any outstanding contributions.

Although they are called the sons of the prophets, the majority of scholars believe them to have been prophetic guilds.<sup>177</sup> Guillaume, though retaining the guild interpretation, is also of the opinion that they were literally sons of the prophets.<sup>178</sup> I believe Guillaume is closer to the correct interpretation of the phrase. When Saul came under the contagion of the sons of the prophets, the question was asked, "What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" Another answered and said, "But who is their father?"<sup>179</sup> Though the meaning is far

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177. W. R. Smith, op. cit., pp. 85-86.

178. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 109.

179. I Sam. 10:11-12.





from clear, the inference is that heredity is involved in affiliating with the sons of the prophets.

From references in the Second Book of Kings it appears that these prophetic guilds were in each major city.<sup>180</sup> They were characterized by their indulgence in frenzied and trance ecstasy. Though they were probably sincere in their purpose, their attempts to carry on the function of the great prophets were for the most part, inferior. After the time of Elisha it appears that their relationship with the leading prophets was distant. The leading prophet became the lone prophet and often denounced other prophets. Since there are no further references to the sons of the prophets after the time of Elisha, we can not be sure how long they continued in existence.

1. The False Prophet. It is a possibility that the later sons of the prophets had their representatives among the false prophets, so vigorously denounced by the great prophets. These false prophets had formed an alliance with the degenerate priestly cultus. That they were soothsayers who had sacrificed their convictions for personal advantage is shown in their sycophant attachment to the aristocracy and royalty of their day.<sup>181</sup>

Povah believes that the false prophet was one who had

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180. II Kings 2:3-5.

181. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 345.





repressed the true message of God. Having been repressed for selfish reasons it breaks out as a perverted message. Only the prophet who is free from repression can be a true prophet.<sup>182</sup> The prophet who halted his progress when he saw a means of livelihood, became the false prophet. The Didache, first century Christian Church manual, contains a test for the true prophet. The prophet who is genuine never exercises his function for his own advantage.<sup>183</sup> The Old Testament has another test. The Deuteronomic law states that the predictions of the true prophet materialize, while those of the false prophet do not. This refers to unconditional predictions.<sup>184</sup>

The false prophet had a weakly indulgent god in contrast to the true prophet's morally uncompromising deity. Being a "fair weather" predictor, he was a popular prophet to have around.<sup>185</sup> He was indifferent to sin.<sup>186</sup> His life, message and influence were opposed to the ethic of Israel's religious culture.<sup>187</sup> For this reason he drew the fire of the great prophet who denounced him with the same fervor as he denounced every other evil. Jeremiah accused the prophets

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182. Povah, The New Psychology and the Hebrew Prophets, p. 166.

183. Hooke, Prophets and Priests, p. 61.

184. Orelli, op. cit., p. 7. Deut. 18:22.

185. Koenig, "Prophecy," Hastings, op. cit., Vol. 10, p. 386.

186. Skinner, op. cit., p. 195.

187. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 349.





of his day of prophesying lies in Yahweh's name. "They prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart,"<sup>188</sup> Isaiah accuses them of drunkenness.<sup>189</sup> Israel's religious cultus had corrupted itself with the licentious religious rites of its neighbors, and had become generally indifferent to the ethical in religion. The false prophets allied themselves with this degenerate cultus. Because of their lack of an ethical standard, it is not improbable that they may have simulated the signs of the prophet, the frenzy of inspiration or the prophetic vision and were merely pretenders to prophecy.<sup>190</sup>

Mowinckel and Obhink distinguish the true prophet as non estatic in function and the false prophet as ecstatic.<sup>191</sup> The differentiation is too exaggerated to agree with the evidence at hand, as ecstasy can be identified with both the true and the false prophet. The difference centers in the spirit rather than in the overt conduct. Regardless of how he received his message, it was the prophet's inner conviction that authenticated that message for himself. This conviction of authenticity was so great that the prophet was

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188. Jere. 11:14.

189. Isaiah 28:7.

190. Farrar, op. cit., p. 10.

191. Rowley, op. cit., pp. 17-18.





convinced that an opposing message originated in an insincere spirit. The revelation experience of the true prophet harmonized with his knowledge of the nature and character of his God. The difference between the true and false prophet therefore lies essentially in the experience of the deity and in the understanding of his character and will.<sup>192</sup>

This concludes the first section of research. The prophet has been historically analyzed in his origin, nature and function. Before a psychology of religious prophecy can be more thoroughly worked out, the significant and recent branch of psychology, parapsychology, will have to be surveyed. From the data of this second section of research, the synthesis between the two sections--the application of the data of parapsychology to the data of the research in religious prophecy--will be made.

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192. Ibid., pp. 34-37.





## CHAPTER V

### SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS IN PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

Gardner Murphy defines parapsychology as

a division of psychology dealing with the para-normal--those psychical effects which appear not to fall within the scope of what is a present normal and recognized law.<sup>1</sup>

The psychical phenomena which parapsychology investigates have a marked similarity to the functions of religious prophecy. It will be our task to relate the data of this science to those of religious prophecy. Before this can be done the data of psychic research--an alternative name for the science--must be surveyed and evaluated. This chapter will attempt such a survey by beginning with a history of psychic research as it began in England and continued in this country. From this history the principles will be culled which are applicable to this study. Special treatment will be given to clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition, postcognition, and psychokinesis. These phenomena are the different manifestations of psychic activity, and will be described together with the conditions that encourage their function.

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1. Gardner Murphy, "Parapsychology," Philip L. Harriman, Editor, Encyclopedia of Psychology (New York: Philosophical Library, 1946), p. 417.





## I. DIMINISHING PREJUDICE

Parapsychology has had a formidable enemy--prejudice. When Mesmer first discovered the powers of hypnotism, his experimental work was brought before a commission from the French Academy of Sciences. The verdict of the commission was that the subject was not worthy of scientific investigation.<sup>2</sup> It is this spirit which hinders all investigations of inexplicable mental phenomena. Psychical research from its beginning has been attacked by those whose system of thought has no place for the occurrences which it investigates. Psychical phenomena--called psi phenomena for convenience--are unwelcome to anyone who resents the challenge they present to a "physicalistic view of human personality."<sup>3</sup> The cerebrocentric interpretation of the human mind by the physical sciences is imperiled by data exposing the inadequacy of this interpretation.<sup>4</sup> The character of psi occurrences, according to one scientist, "justifies our definitely rejecting the physical theories of possible explanations."<sup>5</sup> Another, while admitting the legitimacy of

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2. Thomas J. Hudson, The Law of Psychic Phenomena (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. 1905), p. 84.

3. J. B. Rhine, "The Source of Difficulties in Parapsychology," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 10, (Sept. 1946), p. 167.

4. J. B. Rhine, "The Relationship Between Psychology and Religion," copy of speech broadcast on Town Hall of the Air, (June 11, 1946), pp. 2-3.

5. Rudolf Tischner, Telepathy and Clairvoyance (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1925), p. 210.





labeling these occurrences as non-physical, believes a more appropriate term is psycho-physical.<sup>6</sup>

Those who have a spiritual interpretation of the human mind also have their place in the prejudice against psychical research. The close association of psychical occurrences with religious experiences proved detrimental to the young science. "What was of God was felt to be better left alone."<sup>7</sup> The early affiliation of religionists with scientists in psychical research curtailed critical study and experimentation.<sup>8</sup>

Prejudice from religious circles has greatly diminished. Rhine, speaking on The Town Hall of the Air on the relationship between psychology and religion, stated that even the concepts of God and survival are considered in the domain of scientific research. Both these religious beliefs, Rhine continued, are capable of a scientific explanation at the present time. It is his opinion that religion should welcome these inroads of science as aids in its teaching.<sup>9</sup>

William McDougall visioned the service which parapsychology could offer mankind. He believed that materialism,

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6. R. A. McConnell, "Physical on Non Physical," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 11, (June, 1947), p. 117.

7. E. R. Dodds, "Telepathy and Clairvoyance in Classical Antiquity," *Ibid.*, Vol. 10. p. 294.

8. *Loc. cit.*

9. Rhine, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9.





if left unchecked, would destroy human life. He was also convinced that science alone could halt this destruction.<sup>10</sup> The way in which science could perform its salvation would be through psychical research.

If mind in any manner and degree transcends the physical world and its laws, surely it may somehow and somewhere be possible to obtain direct evidence of the fact by the methods of science, by observation of phenomena and by reasoning from them! That is the proposition on which psychical research is founded.<sup>11</sup>

There is a liberal trend in modern psychology. Many of its leading figures are not limiting themselves to any one point of view, but are open minded to the evidence of further scientific investigation.<sup>12</sup> It is difficult to view without prejudice experimental data which are disrupting to ones system of thought. It took Freud ten years to admit the occurrence of telepathy. The long delay, he confessed, was due to the "fear of our scientific world-view being menaced by it."<sup>13</sup> According to Akhilananda, Indian psychology has a psychocentric view of man. The mind purposely controls the sense organs and nervous system to contact the objective world. Receiving sensations and impressions through these organs, it unifies them into coherent

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10. William McDougall, Religion and the Sciences of Life (Durham: Duke University Press, 1934), pp. 51-63.

11. William McDougall, "Quotations: William McDougall," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 9, (September, 1945), back cover.

12. Akhilananda, Hindu Psychology, p. 222.

13. Bendit, Paranormal Cognition, p. 26;





information or knowledge. The mind is transcendent over the physical organism. The possibility of extrasensory perception is readily accommodated in this interpretation of the mind.<sup>14</sup>

Despite its cerebrocentric emphasis, western psychology is granting parapsychology a hearing. The spirit is no longer that of Helmholtz, who asserted that no experimental evidence could ever influence him to consider the possibility of extrasensory perception. Twenty pages in the recently published Encyclopedia of Psychology<sup>15</sup> are devoted to parapsychology. The data have become too firmly established to be ignored.

## II. THE BRITISH SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

The founding of British Society for Psychical Research in 1882 is considered the beginning of the science of psychical research. Actually, however, Sir William Crookes had been investigating the claims of psychic mediums since 1869. He and A. R. Wallace had made many attempts to verify the seance phenomena of such mediums as Florrie Cook and D. D. Home. Both Crookes and Wallace were convinced

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14. Akhilananda, op. cit., p. 29.

15. Philip L. Harriman, editor, Encyclopedia of Psychology (New York: Philosophical Library, 1946).





that at least some of the medium's feats were beyond explanation. The investigations of these men provoked the interest which paved the way for the founding of the British Society.<sup>16</sup>

In 1874 The Phasmatological Society at Oxford University was organized. It was the immediate forerunner of the societies for psychical research. The purpose of this group was to gather information concerning psychical phenomena.<sup>17</sup>

The leading spirit in the organization of The British Society for Psychical Research was Barrett. In 1882 he persuaded Edmund Gurney, F. W. H. Myers and Henry Sidgwick to join him in this new venture. Sidgwick was chosen the first president. In his presidential address he chartered the course of the society by directing its purpose to the application of the light of science to the benighted and neglected subject of psychical phenomena.<sup>18</sup>

The early work of the society was with psychic mediums. The first case used was that of the Creery sisters, famous mediums of the day.<sup>19</sup> The research was conducted

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16. Harry Price, Fifty Years of Psychical Research (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1939), pp. 1-50.

17. Ibid., pp. 63-67.

18. Ibid., p. 61.

19. J. B. Rhine, New Frontiers of the Mind (New York: Farrar and Rhinehart, 1937), pp. 28-29.





under the mediums conditions--those of dimly lighted atmosphere and the uncontrolled seance. The conclusions reached, though highly significant, could never impress orthodox science because of the lack of scientific controls in the investigation.<sup>20</sup>

The monumental work, Phantasms of the Living was published in 1886.<sup>21</sup> It is a collection of spontaneous cases of psychical experiences, collected, arranged, analyzed and evaluated by its three authors, Edmund Gurney, F. W. H. Myers and Frank Podmore. These three men together with Sidgwick, Barrett and Sir Oliver Lodge were the leading figures in the early research work of the society. Lodge conducted a series of telepathy tests, published in his book, The Survival of Man, which were forerunners of the present day laboratory tests in extrasensory perception.<sup>22</sup>

The major interest in psychical research is the question of survival. This is especially apparent in the early works of the British Society. While the survival hypothesis served to motivate research, it was also the source of many serious difficulties.

Interest in the question of survival was partially

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20. C. D. Broad, "Introduction to Mr. Whately Carington's and Mr. Soal's Papers," The Proceedings of the British Society for Psychical Research, Vol. 46 (June 1940), p. 27.

21. Edmund Gurney, F. W. H. Myers, and Frank Podmore, Phantasms of the Living (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1918).

22. Sir Oliver Lodge, The Survival of Man (New York: Moffat & Co., 1909).





responsible for the choice of the spiritualist medium as a subject. The spiritualist medium claims to contact the discarnate spirits of the deceased under conditions which are the reverse of scientific procedure. All attempts to identify the medium's control, the test question and the subsequent follow-up, were too personal and subjective to overcome the fact that the tests were lacking scientific controls. They left "most plain men and scientists completely unmoved."<sup>23</sup>

The theory of survival after death attracted many spiritualists to the society. They enrolled as members and worked with the scientists in research. It was like trying to mix oil and water. There was constant tension between the two groups, as the spiritualists approached the problem with the limitations of reverence and the scientists with minds open to experimentation. The conflict reached its climax when Conan Doyle in 1930 resigned from the society and called upon his spiritualist friends to do the same.<sup>24</sup>

Gurney, Myers and Sidgwick died within twenty years of the Society's founding. Mrs. Sidgwick became the leading figure in the Society. Harry Price states, "The feminine element was always a factor at The Society for Psychical

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23. Broad, loc. cit.

24. Price, op. cit., pp. 51 ff.

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23. Price, loc. cit. 24. Price, op. cit., pp. 21 ff.



Research as in most psychic societies."<sup>25</sup>

The official publication of the Society in The Proceedings of the British Society for Psychical Research, which is published quarterly. The Journal of the Society for Psychical Research is published for private circulation among the members and associates of the Society only. It contains detailed treatment of certain cases presented in The Proceedings.

The Society at the present time has emerged from its addiction to the seance, and is actively engaged in laboratory experimentation. The prediction of Maxwell, French investigator, made in 1905, has been fulfilled.

I am persuaded, that someday, perhaps very soon, they [psychic phenomena] will come under scientific discipline, and this, in spite of all obstacles which obstinacy and fear of ridicule accumulate in the way.<sup>26</sup>

The society maintains a full time investigator, has sufficient funds to sponsor experimentation, and publishes the results of the latest British research in parapsychology.

An outstanding experimental work reported recently in issues of The Proceedings is that of W. W. Carington, late student of the Perott Fellowship in psychic research, Trinity College, Cambridge. Carington, until his death in

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<sup>25</sup>. Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>26</sup>. J. A. Maxwell, Metapsychical Phenomena (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1905), p. 393.

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G. P. Parham's Sons, 1905, p. 333.  
 23. J. A. Maxwell, Metaphysical Phenomena (New York: 23. J. A. Maxwell, 1905, p. 333.)



1947, was one of the leading figures in psychic research. His work has established significant data on the nature of extrasensory perception, particularly in its postcognitive and precognitive manifestations.

The work of S. G. Soal, whom Price calls the greatest authority in psychic research,<sup>27</sup> is regularly reported in The Proceedings. Soal, associated with the University of London, has recently completed a series of experiments with K. M. Goldney in precognitive telepathy which have increased our understanding of the process.

The society regularly prints cases of spontaneous psychical phenomena, especially those of precognition, poltergeists, (spirit rappings) and evidences for survival. An outstanding contribution in this field is the analysis of the Society's cases of spontaneous precognition by H. F. Saltmarsh.

Together with these reports on experimental work, the Society publishes criticisms and evaluations of these experiments by such competent men as Professors C. D. Broad, R. H. Thouless and H. H. Price, all past presidents of the Society.

The present president of the Society is G. N. M. Tyrrell, a leading independent investigator in psychical research. When Rhine submitted an article on extrasensory

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27. Price, op. cit., p. 172.





perception to leading authorities in the field for criticism, seven out of eight were British, and associated with the British Society. These seven were W. W. Carington, K. M. Goldney, Denys Parsons, S. G. Soal, R. H. Thouless, G. N. M. Tyrrell, and Donald West. The eighth authority was Murphy, research chairman for The American Society for Psychical Research.<sup>28</sup>

### III. AMERICAN SOCIETIES

Barrett was also the instigator of The American Society for Psychical Research. Coming to America for that purpose, he influenced several scientifically minded men to found the Society in 1885. William James played an important role in the early years of the Society.<sup>29</sup> In 1890 the organization under the leadership of Richard Hodgson became a branch of The British Society. Following Hodgson's death in 1905, an independent society was again organized, this time by J. H. Hyslop.<sup>30</sup>

The early work of The American Society, both as an independent organization and as a branch of The British

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28. J. B. Rhine, "A Digest and Discussion of Some Comments on Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 10, (March, 1946), p. 36.

29. Murphy, "Parapsychology," Ferm, The Encyclopedia of Religion, p. 620.

30. Murphy, "Parapsychology," Harriman, op. cit., p. 417.





Society, was with spiritualist mediums. The most famous of these mediums were Mrs. L. E. Piper, who also went to Britain to be tested by The British Society, and "Margery," otherwise known as Mrs. L. R. G. Crandall.<sup>31</sup> The same criticism leveled against the early work of The British Society is apropos to The American Society. Lacking scientific controls the experimentors were able to record little more than their own impressions and convictions. The conclusion of Frank Podmore, critical British Society Research Officer, applies both to his own society and to the American group.

Only by means of producing efforts which are not merely measured and recorded by instruments of precision but which dispense at all points with the necessity for supervision by fallible human senses can the reality of the hypothetically new force be established.<sup>32</sup>

J. E. Coover said, "The method of the seance is precisely adapted to illusions and hallucinations."<sup>33</sup> It would take a lifetime to master all the fraudulent methods for producing the appearance of psychic phenomena. Pre-arrangements by professionals cannot be scientific, the

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31. Price, op. cit., pp. 110-142.

32. Frank Podmore, The Newer Spiritualism (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1920), p. 141.

33. John E. Coover, "Metapsychic and the Incredulity of Psychologists," Carl Murchison, editor, The Case for and against Psychical Belief (Worcester, Mass.: Clark University, 1927), p. 262.





variables must be controlled.<sup>34</sup> The lack of scientific accuracy in the conclusions of the Societies led Joseph Jastrow to charge them with casting their influence in favor of the occult.<sup>35</sup> Hyslop himself received special criticism from T. W. Mitchell, one time president of The British Society, for being too gullible to the claims of the spiritualists. Mitchell believed that Hyslop's attitude could only alienate those who would approach the subject with open minds.<sup>36</sup>

The present work of the American Society, is laboratory in nature. The research is under the very capable direction of Murphy, head of the department of psychology at the College of the City of New York. The Society also retains a full time investigator, who until her recent resignation was Dr. Gertrude Schmeidler.<sup>37</sup> The Society publishes a quarterly periodical, The Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research. Like the British Proceedings it is largely but not exclusively devoted to the results of the investigation of its Society. Schmeidler has experimented extensively on the relationship of personality

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34. Ibid., p. 277.

35. Joseph Jastrow, Fact and Fable in Psychology (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1901), p. 75.

36. T. W. Mitchell, Medical Psychology and Psychical Research (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1922), p. 213.

37. Parapsychology Bulletin, February, 1947.





types to abilities in extrasensory perception. Murphy writes regularly in the Journal and Rhine is a frequent contributor.

The Boston Society for Psychical Research was organized in 1925. Its organizer and leader was W. F. Prince, an Episcopal clergyman and formerly a research officer of The American Society for Psychical Research.<sup>38</sup> Prince was well respected for his cautious judgment and scientific approach, and though he also experimented with spiritualist mediums, unlike others he was critical of any explanation that implied discarnate spirits.<sup>39</sup> The Boston Society's periodical was called The Bulletin. This Society published the first book of Rhine from the parapsychology laboratory at Duke University. In 1941 the Boston Society amalgamated with The American Society for Psychical Research.

#### IV. PARAPSYCHOLOGY LABORATORY AT DUKE UNIVERSITY

In 1930 the parapsychology laboratory at Duke University was organized. The person largely responsible for the founding of this laboratory was McDougall, then

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38. "Obituary: Dr. Walter Franklin Prince," The Proceedings of the British Society for Psychical Research, Vol. 42, (December, 1934), pp. 289-91.

39. Loc. cit.





head of the department of psychology at that university. McDougall saw a great future for parapsychology. It was his conviction that people would not accept the claims of revelation. Knowledge, he felt, had to replace faith. People desperately needed this knowledge and the possibility of satisfying them lay in psychical research.<sup>40</sup> He believed it held the hope for the salvation of mankind. He knew another who had similar opinions. That man was Rhine, then a professor of biology at the University of Chicago. McDougall asked Rhine to come to Duke and to set up the parapsychology laboratory. He accepted.

The subjects tested by Rhine and his associates are mostly students of Duke University. Students in psychology classes are asked to be tested and all others that desire may volunteer. The high scoring students are asked to continue, and are often motivated to do so by prizes. The advantage of selecting student subjects is that a greater cross section of individuals is tested. It furnishes an estimate of the percentage of people in which we can expect to find extrasensory perception. Also it brings to attention abilities which may otherwise never been noticed. Rhine has discovered some remarkable psychics in this manner.

The methods at the Duke University laboratory have

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40. William McDougall, Religion and the Sciences of Life (Durham: Duke University Press, 1934), pp. 64-78.





rigid scientific controls. The testing materials are Zener cards, drawings, and dice. The Zener card deck consists of five different symbols, each of which are printed five times so that the complete deck contains twenty-five cards. There are many variations in the use of this deck; the basic procedure is as follows. The subject is screened from the operator and the deck of cards. The operator controls the order of the cards and the subject attempts extrasensorily to name the card in question. The rate of calling the cards is determined by the subject, who through electric signals informs the operator when he is ready for the next card. Following a run of twenty-five cards, the subject's list is checked with the order of the cards and his score of hits is tabulated. Chance would average five hits per twenty-five calls. These tests can be arranged to test for general extrasensory perception, pure clairvoyance and precognition.

Matching tests are also commonly used. Instead of calling the card, the subject points to one of the five sample cards of the Zener deck which has been laid before him. The sample cards may be placed in opaque envelopes in order to increase the possibility of extrasensory activity. This test is called blind matching.

The subject may also call down through a deck without having the operator remove one card at a time. If the operator is aware of the symbol, both telepathy and clair-





voyance may be involved. If the operator is not aware of the symbol, only clairvoyance can function. If the subject should call the symbols or match the cards of a deck whose order will not be determined until after the test--the test is for precognition. In testing for precognition the subject calls the order of a deck as he believes it will be after it has been shuffled.

The use of drawings in place of the cards allows a greater freedom of response in testing for extrasensory perception. The subject attempts to draw a picture inclosed in an opaque envelope. Scores are based upon the degree of comparison between the original drawing and the reproduction of the subject.

Experiments with dice test for psychokinesis. The object of the test is to determine whether the mind has any influence over the fall of the dice. In the singles test the subject attempts to roll the dice so that they will fall with a specified face up. The times he succeeds are compared to his number of attempts. This comparison is then related to the comparison for which chance alone would account. If, as in the case of the cards, the figure is consistently above chance, the conclusion is that something extra chance is involved.

In the high dice test, the subject tries to influence a pair of dice to fall with the upper faces totaling eight





or nine. In the low dice test he tries to influence them to total six or less.

Since its beginning in 1930, this laboratory has been trying to perfect its experiments to the exclusion of every possible sensory cue. The subject is placed in a different room from the operator. He sees neither the fronts or the backs of the cards. The only contacting between the subject and the operator is by means of electric signals. The results are forwarded to a third party who checks them, records the results and files the data. Many of the criticisms that their methods received during the early years no longer pertain. The experimentors have used those criticisms to further perfect their methods of scientific procedure.

The data of the experiments at Duke is based on statistics. The number of hits per number of trials is compared to the possibility of these numbers occurring by chance. Bowne has pointed out, that the mere fact that the unusual happens is no reason to suspect unnatural causes, as the most striking coincidents are possible; yet, if in a series there is a predominance of one form above another, when calculation would indicate an equality of occurrence, then we can conclude that there is reason for this abnormality. Continuing from this principle of inductive logic, the reliability of mathematical proof can be affirmed when those





mathematical formulations accurately represent the facts of experience.<sup>41</sup> In other words Rhine's mathematical statistics are the conveyers of the conclusions already experienced through the appropriation and interpretation of the data at hand, through valid human thought processes.

There have been criticisms of the use of mathematical proof, but it has not come from the mathematicians. A statement concerning Rhine's experiments from the Institute of Mathematical Statistics said, "The statistical analysis is essentially valid."<sup>42</sup>

The skeleton of the mathematical calculations used by the parapsychology laboratory are as follows:

$n$  = total number of calls made.

$p$  = probability of successful guess ( $1/5$ ).

$q$  = probability of wrong guess ( $4/5$ ).

$np$  = number of hits expected by chance.

$h$  = hits (successful calls).

$s$  = standard deviation - the square root of  $npq$ .

The standard deviation is the square root of the squared individual deviations, the deviation being the difference

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41. Borden Parker Bowne, The Theory of Thought and Knowledge (New York: Harper & Bros. Publishers, 1899), pp. 182-91.

42. Rhine, et al., Extra-sensory Perception after Sixty Years (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1940), p. 191.





between the number called and the chance expectancy.

$d$  = deviation.

$d = h - np$ .

$X$  = critical correlation ratio. This is the ratio of the degree to which chance was exceeded.

$d = h - np$

$X = \frac{d}{s}$   
 $s = \sqrt{npq}$

$r$  = no. of runs of 25 cards each.

$s = \sqrt{25 \times r \times \frac{1}{5} \times \frac{4}{5}}$

$s = \sqrt{4r}$

$s = 2\sqrt{r}$

The critical ratio is not significant until it is at least 2.5 for eight or more runs.

The parapsychology laboratory has been reporting outstanding positive results for seventeen years. The British experimenters have been unable to reproduce them.<sup>43</sup> Thouless has attempted a number of experiments with the students at the University of Glasgow with only chance results.<sup>44</sup> Soal has had the same experience with students at the University

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43. Price, Fifty Years of Psychical Research, a Critical Survey, pp. 175-6.

44. Broad, op. cit., p. 33.





of London.<sup>45</sup> My very limited experiments with the Zener cards on students at Boston University also indicated only chance results. Rhine acknowledges the fact that many have been unable to adopt his methods with positive results.<sup>46</sup> Concerning his own data he stated in 1940, that it would take six thousand years of chance results produced at the same rate as his experimenters, to reduce the results of the previous six years to a correlation ratio below 2.5.<sup>47</sup>

The laboratory publishes a quarterly, The Journal of Parapsychology, in which the latest investigations and theories are reported. It also publishes The Parapsychology Bulletin which is issued in connection with The Journal. The Bulletin is a news sheet of parapsychological developments throughout the world.

## V. OTHER INVESTIGATIONS

There are societies for psychical research in some thirty countries. These include France, Argentina, Poland (pre war), Germany, Italy, and Holland. In February 1947 Rhine went upon request to the Dominion Republic to establish

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45. S. G. Soal, "Fresh Light On Card Guessing--Some New Effects," Proceedings of the British Society for Psychological Research, Vol. 46, (June, 1940), p. 152.

46. Price, op. cit., pp. 175-6.

47. Rhine, "The Source of the Difficulties in Parapsychology," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 10, p. 163.





a laboratory at the University of Santo Domingo. Most of these societies publish periodicals.<sup>48</sup>

The French society is called Institute Metapsychique International. Its officers include the research experimenters, Rene Warcollier and Marcel Osty. Warcollier with headquarters at Paris established "telepathic posts" throughout Europe.<sup>49</sup> Experiments were conducted between these posts. He also conducted transcontinental telepathy with Murphy and associates in New York City. The periodical of the institute is Revue Metapsychique. Murphy states that the French Institute, the American and British Societies and the Duke University Laboratory comprise the most important research centers today.<sup>50</sup> The pioneer French experimenter was Charles Richet.<sup>51</sup>

Another organization of distinction is the University of London Council for Psychical Research. It was organized in 1934, and was formerly known as the National Laboratory of Psychical Research. C. E. M. Joad was its first chairman and Harry Price its secretary.<sup>52</sup> Its publication is

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48. The Parapsychology Bulletin, February, 1947.

49. Murphy, "Parapsychology," Harriman, Encyclopedia of Psychology, pp. 417-20.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 417.

51. Price, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

52. C. E. M. Joad, "Adventures in Psychical Research," Harpers, Vol. 177, (June, 1938), pp. 35-6 part I.





The Bulletin.

Since 1921 there have been four international congresses of psychical research.<sup>53</sup>

Many European and some American Universities have sponsored psychical research. It is the opinion of Soal that experiments performed at Gronigen University were the most impressive of all experimentations. These were the tests of Professors Brugman, Heymans, and Weinburg of the Department of Psychology on the medium van Dam.<sup>54</sup> Other important work has been done at Cambridge, Harvard, Stanford, and the University of Colorado.<sup>55</sup> Stanford University has an endowment for parapsychological experimentation. Coover conducted investigation with negative results under this endowment in 1919.<sup>56</sup> The Hodgson fellowship at Harvard has supported investigations by Murphy and G. H. Estabrooks. Clark University has the Smith Battles Fund which is at the present time defunct, as is the Seybert Fund of the University of Pennsylvania.<sup>57</sup> Duke University is aiding research in six American colleges and universities and several high schools.<sup>58</sup>

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53. Murphy, "Parapsychology," Encyclopedia of Psychology, p. 417.

54. Price, op. cit., p. 172.

55. Murphy, loc. cit.

56. Ibid., p. 418.

57. The Parapsychology Bulletin, August, 1946.

58. Ibid., February, 1947.





The Parapsychology Bulletin lists seven Ph.D. degrees which have been granted by universities on parapsychological theses. These include the University of London, Cambridge University, Oxford University and Duke University.<sup>59</sup>

There have been some celebrated independent investigators. Tyrrell of England is perhaps the most outstanding of these. He has constructed special mechanical equipment for testing extrasensory perception. The apparatus consists of a series of boxes, each containing a lighting fixture, which is mechanically controlled. The subject is placed in front of the closed boxes to choose the box with the lighted lamp at consecutive intervals. Comparison of the subject's choices and the actual sequence, all mechanically recorded, determines the presence or absence of an extra chance factor. Since all minds are excluded from the information, the findings are purely clairvoyant, or can be arranged to test for precognition.

In his book, Mental Radio, the socialist novelist, Upton Sinclair, has recorded the results of the extrasensory experiments conducted with his wife as subject.<sup>60</sup> The experiments were conducted in as scientific a manner as possible under normal home conditions. They consisted of Mrs. Sinclair's attempts to reproduce Sinclair's drawings

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59. Ibid., May, 1946.

60. Upton Sinclair, Mental Radio (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1930).





clairvoyantly through an opaque envelope. The procedure and conclusions have been favorably received by scientific investigators.<sup>61</sup>

Rudolf Tischner, a continental research worker, conducted many significant experiments with professional psychics in psychometry. The subjects were given an object and were to relate instances which were connected with that object. His work is reported in his book Telepathy and Clairvoyance. The experiments are similar to those recently performed by J. H. Hettinger for his Ph. D. thesis from the University of London.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The majority of these societies, laboratories, and investigators report at least some portion of their work as positive data for the reality of extrasensory perception.<sup>62</sup> In 1938 Thouless, leading British psychologist announced that the time had come for psychologists to consider extrasensory perception as "established phenomena."<sup>63</sup>

The conclusions of these experiments indicate that the phenomena tested are incapable of interpretation by

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61. Price, op. cit., p. 173.

62. J. B. Rhine, et al., Extra-sensory Perception after Sixty Years, p. 243.

63. J. B. Rhine, "The Relationship Between Psychology and Religion," Broadcast Talk over Town Hall of the Air, World Faith Round Table Series, New York: June 11, 1946. p. 3.





known physical concepts. The characteristics of space and time are irrelevant to their function. In the words of Rhine "common physical laws do not govern the operation of the psychical processes that produce the test results."<sup>64</sup> Joad states that there is not even a satisfactory theory that covers all phenomena. He furthermore doubts the possibility of a single satisfactory theory. While we now guess at the mode of causation of some of these occurrences, he concludes, others remain totally inexplicable.<sup>65</sup> The distinctions between clairvoyance, telepathy and precognition, though substantial in our space-time-sense definitions, appear to be the same processes operating in channels differentiated only by a space-time-sense world.<sup>66</sup>

Most authorities believe that psychical abilities are normal faculties of the human mind.<sup>67</sup> Joad explains them as powers native to the mind but normally withheld from use.<sup>68</sup> Rhine believes that the more pronounced cases have a possible hereditary explanation.<sup>69</sup> It is also his belief that one can cultivate these abilities.<sup>70</sup> These powers are under

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64. J. B. Rhine, "Mind Over Matter," Journal for the American Society of Psychical Research, Vol. 38, (October, 1944), p. 201.

65. Joad, "Adventures in Psychical Research," Part I, p. 37.

66. Rhine, "A Digest and Discussion of Some Comments on Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 10, p. 46.

67. Rhine, "Are Psi Phenomena Paranormal," Ibid. p. 152.

68. Joad, op. cit., Part II, July, 1938, p. 209.

69. Rhine, Extra-Sensory Perception (Boston: Bruce Humphries, 1935), p. 154.

70. Ibid., p. 156.





only slight conscious control. There can be little application of them. Applied parapsychology cannot be taken very seriously until we can develop a more conscious control of extrasensory perception.<sup>71</sup>

## VII. THE SPONTANEOUS CASE

The spontaneous case of extrasensory perception has a place in present day psychical research. Rhine, while not wishing to consider the spontaneous case as conclusive proof of extrasensory perception, states that it does contribute to the evidence of this phenomena.<sup>72</sup> Murphy is even more favorable to the use of the spontaneous case. It is his conviction that it tends to support the validity of extrasensory perception very strongly. "The spontaneous cases sent to me make both telepathy and clairvoyance plausible hypotheses."<sup>73</sup>

These spontaneous cases are regularly collected, analyzed and evaluated by the major societies and laboratories. A recent issue of The Parapsychology Bulletin had the following statement inviting its readers to send in

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71. Rhine, "The Question of Practical Application of Parapsychical Abilities," Ibid., Vol. 9, (June, 1945), p. 79.

72. Rhine, "A Digest and Discussion of Some Comments on Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," Ibid., Vol. 10, p. 43.

73. Murphy, "Letters and Comments," The Journal for Parapsychology, Vol. 10, (March, 1946), p. 66.





spontaneous extrasensory experiences.

All investigators in parapsychology are glad to receive reports of spontaneous experiences of unusual character with the view of obtaining valuable suggestions to further study. Such reports would be welcomed and treated confidentially if sent to the editor.<sup>74</sup>

The Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research often has a section for cases of this nature, as does The Proceedings of the British Society for Psychical Research and The Journal for Parapsychology.

With this precedent it would seem fitting that a study of this nature include the spontaneous case. While a student at the university, I cultivated the friendship of P. Having discovered my interest in extrasensory perception, he told me that he had telepathic powers. I had always desired to test him with Zener cards, but the circumstances under which he was living prevented this. I had mentioned to him that I had a call to a church in the mid-west, and he seemed quite interested in this.

Following my return to the university from the holidays, P told me that while I had been gone he had "seen" me preaching in the church to which I had been called. He had lain upon his bed one evening and directed his mind to locate me. He had seen me come out of a door, walk down a walk, enter the church doors, shake hands with some people, and

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74. The Parapsychology Bulletin, May, 1946.





both saw and heard me preaching a sermon. He saw or heard no other part of the service, nor could he remember the content of the sermon. The church which he saw was a massive cathedral type church with a great pipe organ. After hearing this description I felt sorry for P. I had to tell him that I had not even been in the city of my future church, and that the church was a small frame building with a reed organ.

My statements never phased P. He insisted that he had seen me even plainer than he was seeing me then--that he just could not be wrong. Then I remembered that I had preached in my home church during the holidays. I had stepped out of an automobile door, walked up a cement walk and shaken hands with the people at the door. The resident pastor had conducted the liturgy and I had preached the sermon. The church is a huge thirteenth-century Gothic style stone structure. It has a large pipe organ.

The poll also occupies a place in psychic research. Prince polled the 10,016 persons listed in Who's Who of 1937. He wrote to these people asking for a reply to the question of their experiencing any form of psychical experience. He received 430 affirmative replies.<sup>75</sup>

In England the British Society conducted a similar

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75. W. F. Prince, Human Experiences (Boston: Boston Society for Psychical Research, 1931). (Entire book is an account of the results of this poll).





poll through the press in 1882. In 1889 Camille Flammarion polled the subscribers to Les Annals Politique et Littéraires, and Richet polled soldiers at the front in World War I.<sup>76</sup>

Again following a precedent, I conducted a poll of the Boston University School of Theology students in 1945. The question asked was: "Has there been in your life or in the lives of any members of your family any experiences which have impressed either them or you as being possibly extrasensory in nature, something more than a coincidence, such as telepathy?" No positive answer was accepted unless the student was certain of his reply. The families were included because many students were inclined to reject the possibility of any experience as being extrasensory in nature, and also because these incidents often become family affairs.

Of the 140 students interviewed there were 91 negative replies and 49 positive replies. There were 35 per cent who had experiences or whose families had had experiences which impressed either them or their families or both as being extrasensory in nature. I have frequently asked various groups before whom I presented the subject of extrasensory perception these same questions, and the percentage

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76. Rene Warcollier, Experimental Telepathy, (Boston: Boston Society for Psychical Research, 1938) p. v.





of those answering to the affirmative in these groups was always higher than the percentage at the university. It was consistently around 50 per cent.

#### VIII. THE MANIFESTATIONS OF EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION

a. Clairvoyance. Clairvoyance is "extrasensory perception of objective events as distinguished from telepathic perception (of the mental or subjective events of another person)." <sup>77</sup> Many laboratory experiments believed to be testing for clairvoyance were really testing for general extrasensory perception. Later understanding of precognitive telepathy disclosed the difficulty in isolating clairvoyance. What was formerly believed to be solely the perception of an objective event is now seen to include the possibility of precognitive perception of another's mind, who will have had the opportunity of observing the objective event. Tyrrell has developed an experiment which tests solely for clairvoyance. He uses five boxes which can be electrically lighted. Only one box is lighted at each interval and the selection of the box is determined by a complex mechanical device. If the subject chooses the right box, his hit is mechanically and auto-

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<sup>77</sup>. Glossary, Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 10, (September, 1946), p. 216.





matically recorded. With the only record that of trials and hits and no knowledge in anyone's mind which box is selected, precognitive telepathy is excluded. This experiment tests for pure clairvoyance.<sup>78</sup> Laboratory manifestations of clairvoyance under these conditions are definitely positive.<sup>79</sup>

Tischner, through his work in psychometry, describes the clairvoyant impression as appearing first in details from which the whole is deduced. This method is the opposite from sensory perception.<sup>80</sup> There is no explanation for the occurrence of clairvoyant perception.<sup>81</sup> West has stated that it could be explained by a thoroughgoing idealism--where all that exists is in our minds.<sup>82</sup> This is really not an explanation, but a particular theory to interpret the data, for a thoroughgoing idealism is as difficult to explain as clairvoyance.

b. Telepathy. Telepathy is "extrasensory perception of the mental activities of another person. It does not include the clairvoyant perception of objective events."<sup>83</sup>

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78. Rhine, "Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered, The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 9, p. 185.

79. Rhine, "A Digest and Discussion of Some Comments on Telepathy and Clairvoyance," Ibid., Vol. 10, p. 50.

80. Tischner, Telepathy and Clairvoyance, p. 37.

81. Rhine, "Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 178.

82. Rhine, "A Digest and Discussion of Some etc.," Ibid., Vol. 10, p. 38.

83. Glossary, loc. cit.





Most laboratory experiments test for general extrasensory perception. Since there is good reason for believing that the various manifestations of extrasensory perception are convenient descriptions of their effect upon the sensory world, isolative tests are of relatively minor importance. Typical of the more recent of these general tests are those of Hettinger of the University of London. He chose professional mediums as subjects and tested them for psychometry. They were given articles of various kinds with which they had no former association, and told to relate as many things connected with the history of the objects as they could. The scoring was based upon relative degrees of success. Hettinger's work was done for a Ph.D thesis, and was conducted upon a rigid scientific basis. His results, he asserted, were experimental and statistical proof of the existence of an ultra-sensory factor. There is something in the "sensitive" (medium) that enables him to score higher than he would by guessing.<sup>84</sup>

Hettinger's work with psychometry tested extrasensory perception which could have been of a clairvoyant, telepathic, precognitive, or postcognitive nature. Tests like Tyrrell's isolate clairvoyance. Others have been made exclusively for precognition, though there is yet an additional division into precognitive telepathy and precognitive clairvoyance.

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84. Hettinger, The Ultra Perceptive Faculty, p. 173.





Postcognition tests are made in the same manner as precognition tests except that the extrasensory perception is directed to an event in the past rather than the future.

Many experiments have been conducted which supposedly were evidence for pure telepathy. Lodge conducted experiments which he felt were solely for telepathy.<sup>85</sup> He selected agents who were to think of certain things and percipients who were to pick up these thoughts. With certain percipients he obtained positive results.<sup>86</sup> Podmore explained the cross correspondence between the mediums being tested by The British Society as instances of telepathy.<sup>87</sup> Richet conducted a unique experiment in "table tapping" which he believed to test for telepathy. Instead of having a first subject who was in psychical contact with the table control mentally the movements of the table, he directed a second subject at a distance from the table to attempt to control the movements of the table through the mind and body of the first subject.<sup>88</sup> The long distance telepathy experiments between Warcollier in Paris and Murphy in New York had as favorable results as those of shorter distance.<sup>89</sup>

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85. Lodge, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

86. Loc. cit.

87. Podmore, op. cit., p. 245

88. Ibid., p. 296.

89. Warcollier, op. cit., p. 72.





Recent understanding has shown that none of these tests could claim scientifically to have isolated telepathy. In the words of Rhine, "It seems very doubtful if any test for pure telepathy has ever been conducted."<sup>90</sup> Either the experiments were lacking in scientific controls, or as in the case of the early Duke University experiments for pure telepathy, were not excluding the possibility of precognitive clairvoyance. When the thought of the agent is perceived by the subject that thought has to be recorded before the comparisons are made, or else the experiment is not scientifically controlled. When that thought is recorded, "there is the possibility of precognitive clairvoyance in the test."<sup>91</sup> While clairvoyance is an "established fact" of parapsychology, telepathy is a "logical possibility."<sup>92</sup>

Instances of telepathy as a logical possibility indicate that it is fragmentary in nature.<sup>93</sup> Like clairvoyance the parts are perceived from which the whole is deduced. There is no explanation for telepathy. The popular thought that telepathy has a more plausible hypothesis than clairvoyance is not substantiated. This belief is the result of associating telepathy with thought waves of an electromagnetic

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<sup>90</sup>. Rhine, "Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," op. cit., Vol. 10, p. 179.

<sup>91</sup>. Loc. cit.

<sup>92</sup>. Rhine, "A Digest and Discussion etc.", op. cit., p. 50.

<sup>93</sup>. Julian Duguid, I Am Persuaded (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1941), p. 282.

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90. Rhine, "Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," pp. 117-118, Vol. 10, p. 172.  
 91. Loc. cit. p. 172.  
 92. Rhine, "A Digest and Discussion etc.," pp. 117-118, p. 50.  
 93. Julian Huxley, I Am Persuaded (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1941), p. 232.



nature. All physical theories have been discarded, lacking proponents, because they are not possibly applicable with our present knowledge. There is no decrease in intensity with the increase of distance.<sup>94</sup> The phenomena of telepathy remains just as inexplicable as the phenomena of clairvoyance.<sup>95</sup>

c. Precognition. Precognition is "cognition of a future event that could not be known through rational inferences."<sup>96</sup> Precognition is only recently receiving attention. In previous experimentations, though it was not an unknown concept, it was not seriously entertained. Like clairvoyance, it had to await more critical and scientific ways of thinking.<sup>97</sup>

It is the most inconceivable of all extrasensory perceptions, because it penetrates time which has not been reached. Hettinger in his psychometric tests reported two associations with objects which were one day ahead of their actual happening in time.<sup>98</sup> Tyrrell's mechanically controlled experiments are easily adaptable to precognition tests. He obtained positive results, although the subject

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94. Tischner, op. cit., p. 73.

95. Rhine, "Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," op. cit., p. 178.

96. Glossary, loc. cit.

97. Rhine, "Telepathy: Will History Repeat Itself," op. cit., Vol. 10, p. 4.

98. Hettinger, op. cit., p. 169.





did poorly if he knew he was being tested for precognition. The inconceivability of the process was the negative influence.<sup>99</sup> The Duke laboratory has done considerable experimentation in precognition, with the Zener cards. Rhine's judgment of the tests is that "if scientific method has any value at all, there is no reason for rejecting the conclusion that precognition occurs."<sup>100</sup>

Our temporal as well as spatial laws are set aside in the extrasensory perception of precognition. Rhine reports that his results for precognition of a period ten days in advance are as positive as those for a period two days ahead.<sup>101</sup>

There is no explanation for precognition. That an event in the future can be perceived in the present has no place in our knowledge of the physical universe. Several theories have been offered in an attempt to find a place for precognition in our system of thought. These will be discussed in the next chapter.

Recent experiments in England have made a notable discovery in precognition. W. W. Carington, in testing for extrasensory perception, used drawings instead of Zener cards.

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99. Tyrrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-6.

100. Rhine, "A Digest and Discussion of Some Comments etc.," *op. cit.*, Vol. 10, p. 40.

101. Rhine, "The Relationship Between Psychology and Religion," Copy of Broadcast Talk over Town Hall of the Air, World Faith Round Table Series, p. 5.





He believes the cards lack human interest and are tedious to the subject.<sup>102</sup> He had new drawings made each evening and the test was made with those drawings the following morning. He graded his results in the degree of comparison between the original drawing and the extrasensory reproduction. His results were all chance until he noticed that some of the reproduced drawings were more similar to original drawings that were used in tests preceding or succeeding the one in question. By making his comparisons with these other drawings instead of the one supposedly the original, he obtained fifty hits above chance in two thousand drawings.<sup>103</sup> That for which he was testing in these latter tabulations was postcognition and precognition.

Soal was having the same difficulty as Carington. He was testing his subjects with cards and was getting only chance results. Carington told him to check his subjects' calls with cards immediately preceding or following the one the subject was attempting to call. When he did he obtained pronounced positive results with two of his subjects.<sup>104</sup>

Soal tried another experiment in conjunction with Goldney, with B.S. a professed telepathist as the subject.

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102. Carington, op. cit., p. 39.

103. Ibid., p. 131.

104. Soal "Fresh Light on Card Guessing," The Proceedings for the Society for Psychical Research, Vol. 46, pp. 152-198.





They used the random selection by touch of marked counters to determine the order of the cards to be used. By keeping the order out of all minds they could test purely for precognition. Geoffrey Redmayne has invented a machine which would have eliminated the volitional element in the touch selection.<sup>105</sup> It was not available for this experiment. The experiments were conducted under rigid controls, being checked by highly competent British investigators. There were forty sittings in two and a quarter months. The results were decidedly positive for precognition.<sup>106</sup>

The conclusion of these experiments is that the faculty of extrasensory perception has a rather poor aim. It hits more frequently to the left or right of the bull's eye, than it does the bull's eye. Soal comments, "It is really rather surprising that Dr. Rhine discovered so many subjects who tended to cognize the card actually in focus at the moment."<sup>107</sup> The discovery of this "wobbly" type of perception has eased the British frustration in their inability to reproduce the Duke results. It has also made a significant contribution to our knowledge of precognition. It is more easily correlated with the observation that

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105. Geoffrey Redmayne, "The Isolation of the Percipient in Tests for Extrasensory Perception," The Journal of the British Society for Psychical Research Vol. 46, (November, 1940), pp. 245-256.

106. S. G. Soal and K. M. Goldney, "Experiments in Pre-Cognitive Telepathy," The Proceedings, Vol. 47, pp. 21-151.

107. Ibid., p. 26.





extrasensory perception is under only slight conscious control than is the data of consciously directed hits. From the data precognition seems to be one of the most common of extrasensory perceptions.

d. Postcognition. Postcognition is the knowledge of a past event which could not have been known through normal means. The tests for postcognition were included in those described in precognition. Postcognition receives very little attention in psychical research, possibly because of the more revolutionary character of precognition which perceives events not yet in existence.

e. Psychokinesis. Psychokinesis is "the direct influence on a physical system by a subject without any known intermediate physical energy or instrumentation."<sup>108</sup> The tests for psychokinesis have produced more positive data than those for extrasensory perception.<sup>109</sup> The difficult intellectual adjustment required to accept psychokinesis has hindered its acceptance in scientific circles.<sup>110</sup>

Psychokinesis is mind over matter.<sup>111</sup> There is no explanation for it in our present store of knowledge. The principles governing it seem to be purposive in character.

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<sup>108</sup>. Glossary, loc. cit.

<sup>109</sup>. Rhine, "Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 9, p. 187.

<sup>110</sup>. Loc. cit.

<sup>111</sup>. Rhine, "Mind Over Matter," The Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research, Vol. 38, (1944), pp. 185-202.





If the subject can use the dice he likes best, and try for the number he favors, he usually scores higher.<sup>112</sup>

Psychokinesis is not only mind over matter, but is in part a conscious control of mind over matter.

Psychokinesis is coupled with clairvoyance in its function. It has to be guided by some directing influence in order to know which face of the die is up. Purposive action requires a knowledge of the rolling dice.<sup>113</sup> This would be clairvoyance. The establishment of clairvoyance as a scientifically observed phenomena is increased by the firm foundation upon which psychokinesis rests.<sup>114</sup>

#### IX. DESCRIPTION OF CONDITIONS INVOLVING EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION

The major characteristic of extrasensory phenomena is that they are law abiding.<sup>115</sup> There are conditions which favor its occurrence and conditions which hinder its function. The conditions favoring its occurrence are the following.

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112. Ibid., p. 200.

113. Rhine, "Telepathy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 9, p. 186.

114. Ibid., p. 187.

115. Hans Driesch, Psychical Research (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1933), p. 173.

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112. Ibid., p. 200.
113. Rhine, "Telestethy and Clairvoyance Reconsidered," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 9, p. 186.
114. Ibid., p. 187.
115. Hans Orlbach, Psychical Research (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1935), p. 173.



a. Enthusiasm. Nearly seventy years ago Barrett discovered that "pleasurable excitement" was an aid to extrasensory perception.<sup>116</sup> The emotions are closely connected with spontaneous psychical experiences. This same connection must be transferred to the laboratory if the results are to be positive. The subject must approach the test with enthusiasm.

b. Cooperation between subject and experimenter. J. G. Pratt and M. M. Price accidentally conducted experiments in the subject, experimenter relationship. Both were testing boys and girls at an orphanage. Price had good results; Pratt only chance. In comparing notes they discovered that they had been using different techniques in approaching their subjects. Pratt kept the conversation on the experiment. He explained the test and gave directions. Price talked about a half an hour with her subject before the test about anything the subject desired. She continued this general conversation during the test. They questioned whether this difference in technique could account for the discrepancy in results. Price confirmed this possibility by adopting Pratt's method in subsequent tests. The results were chance.<sup>117</sup> For positive results there should be rapport

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116. Rhine, Extrasensory Perception, p. 285.

117. J. G. Pratt and M. M. Price, "The Experimenter-Subject Relationship in Tests for ESP," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 2 (1938), pp. 84-94.





between the subject and the experimenter.

c. Good motivation. A skilled experimenter encourages his subject; he inspires in him confidence that he can do well. He makes him feel the tests are important, and arouses in him an ambition to try to further scientific knowledge by obtaining positive results.<sup>118</sup> He keeps the experiment novel by varying the procedure. He gives rewards for good scoring as does Rhine, or inspires competition between his subjects.<sup>119</sup> He uses these methods to motivate his subject to desire to be tested.

d. Freedom in response. C. E. Stuart, an associate of Rhine, before his death in 1947 was testing for extrasensory perception with drawings and conducting experiments in psychometry. His purpose was to gain greater freedom in response than the cards afforded. He was seeking to perfect an experiment which would utilize free verbal material and still insure scientific reliability.<sup>120</sup> The more freedom a subject has in directing his extrasensory faculty, the better will be his results.

e. Belief in extrasensory perception. Schmeidler and Murphy performed experiments on the influence of belief and disbelief in extrasensory perception. The results were

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<sup>118</sup>. Rhine et.al., Extrasensory Perception After Sixty Years, p. 341.

<sup>119</sup>. Ibid., pp. 289-290.

<sup>120</sup>. Parapsychology Bulletin, February, 1947.





conclusive evidence that belief is a decided factor in high scoring.<sup>121</sup> For this reason children make very good subjects. They do not doubt their abilities in extrasensory perception when told they have them. A skeptical subject will probably score lower than a believing one.

f. Relaxed concentration. Mental concentration does not differ from relaxation in parapsychological terminology. The two are assumed simultaneously in what can best be described as a relaxed concentration. A relaxed concentration is conducive to extrasensory perception. The mind must be quiescent and unaffected by the surroundings.<sup>122</sup> Stuart said that concentration and relaxation were the "dramatics of extrasensory perception rather than the optimal conditions for extrasensory perception."<sup>123</sup> By this he means that they are products rather than requisites of extrasensory perception. The subject's mind is relaxed by focusing it upon a blank--by concentrating on nothing.

The very nature of laboratory experimentation is unavoidably unfavorable to extrasensory perception. Extrasensory perception is under but slight conscious control, and often the voluntary character of the experiment is

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121. Ibid., August, 1946.

122. Hettinger, op. cit., p. 192.

123. Murphy, "Parapsychology," Harriman, op. cit., p. 426.





inhibiting.<sup>124</sup> The subject may try too hard; he may think to direct this faculty as though it were wholly consciously controlled. Making use of the favorable conditions reduces this inhibition. The unfavorable conditions are as follows.

a. Restraints. Since freedom of response is a favorable condition for extrasensory perception, restraints of any nature are unfavorable. Rhine experimented with this factor in altering a subject's response time by using a metronome at speeds either slower or faster than the subject's desire rate, to control the subject's rate. The results fell below the subject's previous record.<sup>125</sup>

b. Fatigue. If the runs were continued over any extended period of time the score began to lower. If the subject was mentally tired, he rarely scored up to par. These indications showed that fatigue had a negative effect on extrasensory perception.

c. Distraction. It was discovered that a subject's scoring dropped when someone entered the test room. He also did poorly when he was worried over something.<sup>126</sup> All distractions which divert the subject's attention from his relaxed concentration have an unfavorable influence on his

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124. Warcollier, op. cit., p. 33.

125. Rhine, "Charles E. Stuart," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 11 (1947), p. 72.

126. Hettinger, op. cit., p. 60.





extrasensory perception.

d. Introspection. As previously mentioned, extrasensory perception is not under conscious control. Any attempt on the subject's part to introspect, to examine his mental condition while taking the test, has a tendency to lower his results.<sup>127</sup> Introspection interrupts the passive condition of the conscious mind which is necessary for the operation of extrasensory perception.

e. Self-consciousness. Subjects who have difficulty in overcoming self-consciousness rarely do well in extrasensory perception.<sup>128</sup> A continual awareness of oneself is not relaxed concentration. The attention is divided between passivity and active awareness.

f. Trance--ineffective. Rhine has experimented with professed mediums, both in the normal state and in a trance condition, and noticed no appreciable difference in scoring.<sup>129</sup> An explanation could be that the normal condition of a medium attempting extrasensory perception would be one of relaxed concentration, even as her trance states.

There is a difference in opinion on the effect of ill health on the experiments. Hettinger observed that his

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127. J. M. Bevan, "ESP Tests in Light and Darkness," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 11 (1947), p. 87.

128. Loc. cit.

129. Rhine, Extrasensory Perception after Sixty Years, p. 263.





psychics did poorly when in ill health,<sup>130</sup> while Soal reported that the success of B.S. was independent of his health or illness. The expectancy of B.S. in regard to his possibility of high scoring on any particular day also had no effect on the scoring.<sup>131</sup> Perhaps B.S. is an exceptional case, and that ill health, because of its distracting influence, is an unfavorable condition.

Thought transference is a specialized form of extra-sensory perception, and has particular conditions favoring its occurrence. Two individuals are actively engaged in thought transference, the agent and the percipient. It was formerly believed that the agent should concentrate on the thought he wished to transfer, while the percipient remained in a state of relaxed concentration. Dr. Jan Ehrenwald is of the opinion that the concentration of the agent hinders the transference. It is the repressed or semi-repressed problem that is readily related to the percipient.<sup>132</sup> Since Ehrenwald's theory is being generally accepted, we can say that concentration on the part of the agent probably hinders the thought transference.

Thought transference is facilitated by accord between the agent and the percipient. This accord is a psychological

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130. Hettinger, op. cit., p. 60.

131. Soal and Goldney, op. cit., p. 79.

132. Bendit, op. cit., p. 18.





affinity, and does not appear to be dependent upon acquaintance. Strangers often will have thought transference between them because of the facility of association between their psychic charges.<sup>133</sup> Acquaintance without accord is of no aid in the transference. Intimacy between the percipient and agent is a decidedly favorable factor in thought transference.<sup>134</sup> The telepathic communications between lovers, members of a family, good friends, are common experience. The intimate relations between people are often the result of an initial psychical accord between them, and the development of intimacy increases this accord. Carington has discovered that a common object in psychometry aids the results, and a known association of ideas is favorable to telepathic communication.<sup>135</sup> Hettinger in his psychometry tests noticed that the psychics attained a high degree of success with articles belonging to a certain person, and completely negative results with those belonging to another. The difference lay in the accord between the psychic and the individual.<sup>136</sup>

There are qualities of personality that also affect the performance of extrasensory perception. An unaffected

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133. Warcollier, op. cit., pp. 81-92.

134. Bendit, op. cit., p; 67.

135. Loc. cit.,

136. Hettinger, op. cit., p. 129.





person scores on the whole higher than the suggestible individual. Stuart did research in affectability for his Ph.D. thesis. Those who did not allow the score of a run to affect their performance on the next run were the subjects who scored highest. The suggestible subjects had only chance results.<sup>137</sup>

Subjects with well adjusted personalities do better than those who are poorly adjusted. Schmeidler performed an experiment on the affect of adjustment of extrasensory perception. She chose both "sheep" and "goats" as subjects. The sheep are the believers in the reality of extrasensory perception, and the goats are the disbelievers--following the terminology of parapsychologists.<sup>138</sup> She made the further division of well adjusted sheep and goats and poorly adjusted sheep and goats. The well adjusted sheep scored above chance. The poorly adjusted sheep and goats scored only chance. The well adjusted goats scored below chance. The significance of the below chance scoring of well adjusted goats is that extrasensory perception can work in a negative way. The subject can use extrasensory perception to call the wrong card. The disbelief of the well adjusted goats evidently unconsciously affected their extrasensory perception

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<sup>137</sup>. Rhine, "Charles E. Stuart," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 11, p. 73.

<sup>138</sup>. Rhine, Reach of the Mind, pp. 144 ff.





in this deceptive manner.<sup>139</sup>

B. M. Humphrey, a Duke research worker, has performed experiments based on the scoring of subjects with expansive and compressive personalities. Her results showed that the expansives did better in clairvoyance tests, while the compressives did better in the general extra-sensory perception tests.<sup>140</sup>

The subject of the effect of personality on extra-sensory scoring is receiving much attention at the present time. Both the Duke University laboratory and the American Society for Psychical Research are conducting extensive experimentation in this field. Schmeidler uses the Rorschach test to determine the degree of adjustment among her subjects. Humphrey's experiments on the effect of expansion and compression are conducted with drawings. The drawings serve the purposes both of denoting the subjects' expansive-compressive tendencies, and their degree of scoring in extra-sensory perception.<sup>141</sup> Humphrey wrote her Ph.D. thesis on these experiments.<sup>142</sup> In Rhine's tribute to Stuart following his death he said that throughout Stuart's career his foremost interest was the problem of understanding extrasensory

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139. Parapsychology Bulletin, May, 1947.

140. Bevan, op. cit., p. 81.

141. Loc. cit.

142. Parapsychology Bulletin, May, 1946.





perception in terms of the psychology of personality.<sup>143</sup>

This concludes the section of psychical research. The science of parapsychology has been historically investigated and its data listed. The task ahead is to synthesize the investigations of the prophet studied in the first section with material studied in this section. The purpose of the next chapter will be the application of the data of parapsychology to religious prophecy.

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143. Rhine, loc. cit.





## CHAPTER VI

### EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION IN PROPHECY

The prophetic function corresponds in many ways to the phenomena investigated in psychical research. The conditions conducive to prophetic experience are strikingly similar to those favoring the occurrence of extrasensory perception. It will be the purpose of this chapter to investigate these resemblances and come to conclusions regarding the place of extrasensory perception in religious prophecy. Spontaneous psychical experiences will be investigated with a view of establishing a bridge between the laboratory data for extrasensory perception and the various functions of prophecy. This investigation will include the nature of psychical phenomena, a study of mediumship as extrasensory perception, the conditions favoring the occurrence of psychical phenomena and introspective descriptions of these experiences. There will be a section devoted exclusively to the phenomenon of prediction, together with theories offered in explanation. The chapter will conclude with a detailed examination of the prophets as possessors of extrasensory perception, through the application of data taken from the previous sections of this study.





## I. THE NATURE OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA

Psychical phenomena have been observed and experienced since the beginning of the history of mankind. Even animals appear to exhibit powers beyond the senses. J. A. Spears described the flight of a pigeon from France to its home in Indo-China. He concludes that the flight must have been guided by some kind of extrasensory knowledge.<sup>1</sup> The awareness of Balaam's ass of a presence which Balaam could not perceive resembles to a degree this extrasensory knowledge in animals.<sup>2</sup>

Aristotle attempted to incorporate psychical experiences into his philosophy. Augustine's interest resulted in "the most careful and sober descriptions of subnormal occurrences which have come down to us from antiquity."<sup>3</sup> Swedenborg's psychical experiences led Kant to make a study of psychical phenomena which he published under the title, Dreams of a Spirit Seer. He felt that those who sought revelation through psychical experiences should have patience until they reached the other world.<sup>4</sup> Dodds rates Aristotle,

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1. Parapsychology Bulletin, May, 1947.

2. Franklin Johnson, The New Psychic Studies in Their Relation to Christian Thought (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1887), p. 86.

3. Dodds, "Telepathy and Clairvoyance in Classical Antiquity," The Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 10, (December 1946), p. 306.

4. Emanuel Kant, Dreams of a Spirit Seer (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1900), pp. 121-122.





Augustine and Kant as pioneer thinkers in psychical research.

Freud observed psychical phenomena in two of his patients. In both of these cases the individual was aware of information which he apparently had no possible way of knowing except through psi activity. The information was confused in the same manner as dreams often distort actual occurrences in their reenaction of them.<sup>6</sup> While Freud recognized the existence of psi phenomena, he believed them to be primitive functions which have been superseded in the evolutionary scale.<sup>7</sup>

The resemblance of psi experiences to those of an overactive imagination makes their distinction at times difficult. Hudson observed that the power that causes automatic writing in certain psychics is always respondent to the power of suggestion.<sup>8</sup> The intuition and hunch often thought to be purely imaginative are believed by Bendit to be at least partly paranormal cognition.<sup>9</sup> Hence it appears that suggestion, imagination and psi activity work together, and their separation in any one experience is extremely difficult.

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5. Dodds, loc. cit.

6. Bendit, Paranormal Cognition, p. 20.

7. Ibid., p. 22.

8. Hudson, The Law of Psychic Phenomena, p. 256.

9. Bendit, op. cit., p. 256.





It is the opinion of Akhilananda that neither the power of suggestion nor the imaginative capacities can give the mind more than it contains. Nor can they change the personality by integrating the emotions.<sup>10</sup> These therapeutic and informative capacities belong to psi activity, he contends, and provide a definite distinction between the imagination and psi. What one may experience due to the suggestions originating in his own mind or to the activities of a heightened imagination is limited in content and effect to the knowledge and condition of that mind. Psi activity opens the mind to a greater knowledge and due to its superconscious character has an integrating effect on that mind. This contrast between the imagination and psi activity will be discussed in the following chapter.

Lyttleton, past president of the British Society for Psychical Research, classifies psi phenomena as follows:

1. Dreams. 2. Mind pictures. 3. Visual and auditory impressions (visions). 4. Automatic and inspirational writing and utterance. 5. Miscellaneous impressions.<sup>11</sup>

She classifies information gained through these various modes of psi activity as follows:

1. Knowledge of the past or present, not obtained normally. 2. Superconscious knowledge apparently imparted with a motive. 3. Knowledge of the future

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10. Akhilananda, Hindu Psychology, p. 160.

11. Lyttleton, Our Superconscious Mind, p. 62.





acquired superconsciously, but which might have been in the consciousness or superconsciousness of other living minds. 4. Knowledge of the future not possible from other living minds or even deducible from knowledge superconsciously acquired.<sup>12</sup>

Psi activities seem to operate independently of the conscious mind. Heard states that psi emerges into the individual consciousness when its attention is relaxed. Osty describes psi as breaking through into consciousness. When the conscious mind is focused on psi activity, it immediately distorts and soon terminates the experience.<sup>13</sup>

The spontaneous psychical experience is apparently without the limitations of space and time. It can transcend the circumference of the earth as it penetrates the next room; it knows no barriers of past, present and future.<sup>14</sup> Phenomena as unnatural and paranormal as these led Augustine to exclaim, "If anyone can trace the causes and modes of operation of these visions and divinations and really understands them, I had rather hear his views than be expected to discuss the subject myself."<sup>15</sup>

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12. Loc. cit.

13. Heard, The Ascent of Humanity, pp. 312-13.

14. Ibid., p. 315.

15. Dodds, op. cit., p. 84.





## II. MEDIUMSHIP AS EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION

A group who specialize in psychical phenomena in our day are the spiritualist mediums. Podmore credits Swedenborg with initiating the modern belief in intercourse with the spirits of the deceased. The Swedish seer claimed he communicated with the spirits of the great of all ages.<sup>16</sup>

The spiritualist seance prevents any attempt at genuine scientific investigation. The medium however has a legitimate claim to the seance atmosphere. Psychic phenomena are not consciously controlled, but they are consciously inhibited. The seance atmosphere reduces these conscious inhibitions by curtailing all distractions and arresting the activity of the conscious mind. The mere thought that he is being investigated may cause the medium to become self-conscious and hinder his performance. The adverse suggestion that he might fail can actually cause the medium to fail the test. To avoid this he insists on what are for him, harmonious conditions.<sup>17</sup>

The annals of the accomplishments of spiritualist mediums are voluminous. The feats of D. D. Home, particularly his immunity to hot coals, have puzzled the most skeptical observers.<sup>18</sup> There are two hundred pages of the records of

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16. Podmore, The Newer Spiritualism, p. 7.

17. Hudson, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

18. Lang, Cock Lane and Common Sense, p. 49.





Mrs. Leonore Piper's sittings, and Hodgson reports that only six of these sittings can be classed as failures.<sup>19</sup> Many of the phenomena produced by Rudi Schneider, the continental medium, though investigated by as critical observer as Harry Price, have never been explained, even in theory.<sup>20</sup> James witnessed many sittings of Mrs. Piper, and was convinced that she was aware of information in her trances which she could not have possibly known in her waking state.<sup>21</sup>

Both Lodge and Hodgson were so impressed by the accomplishments of mediums that they became spiritualists.<sup>22</sup> In defense of his belief Hodgson said, "I have no hesitation in affirming with the most absolute assurance that the 'spirit' hypothesis is justified by its fruits, and other hypotheses are not."<sup>23</sup>

The critical philosopher, Joad describes cases of poltergeist phenomena--spirit rappings and other inexplicable noises--as containing facts which are totally fantastic.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the convictions of those who subscribe to the spiritualist doctrine, the phenomena can be explained

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19. Podmore, op. cit., p. 182.

20. Price, Fifty Years of Psychical Research, a Critical Survey, pp. 92-109.

21. Lodge, The Survival of Man, p. 202.

22. Ibid., p. 326.

23. Ibid., p. 257.

24. Joad, "Adventures in Psychical Research," Part II, Harpers (July, 1938), p. 257.





largely by psychological principles. For those instances which remain an enigma the advice of Podmore seems the most reasonable. "The wisest counsel, if also the most difficult to follow, is to hold our judgment in suspense."<sup>25</sup> The fantastic explanations of Hereward Carrington of these phenomena only support the wisdom of Podmore's advice. His belief that a fluid can come from a medium and impress upon a photographic plate an image or picture of her thought at the time,<sup>26</sup> and his explanation of phantoms as thought bodies constructed by the intelligence which operates through the medium are too large a demand upon one's credulity.<sup>27</sup>

There is also in many seances the possibility of fraud. In describing the observations of several of the early research officers of the British Society, on the medium, Eusapia, Podmore states that they left many obvious loopholes for trickery.<sup>28</sup> Hodgson exposed the Theosophist, Madame H. Blavatsky, as one skilled in the conjurer's art.<sup>29</sup> The Research officers of both the British and American Societies have exposed the phenomena of many professed mediums

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25. Podmore, op. cit., p. 267

26. Hereward Carrington, Your Psychic Powers and How to Develop Them (New York: Dodd, Mead Co., 1920), p. 228.

27. Ibid., p. 240.

28. Podmore, op. cit., p. 141.

29. Price, op. cit., p. 286.





as wholly or in part, fraudulent.

Fraud on the part of the medium is not always voluntary. The trance personality which she induces through her seance ritual is commonly non-moral. It reacts to exposure in a similar way that small children and savages would react. Should its identification with a discarnate spirit be challenged, it feels its primary obligation is to prevent exposure. It will resort to fraud to meet this obligation, when the conscious personality of the medium would recoil from any such dishonesty.<sup>30</sup>

The conjurer, Joseph Dunninger, has described the influence that expectancy has on what the witness observes<sup>31</sup>. "Smoke without fire is a simple matter," he said, "When one knows how to make it."<sup>32</sup> Hudson believes it is completely reasonable to interpret the discarnate spirit as a creation<sup>33</sup> of the subconscious minds of those who accept their existence. The imagination of the sitter often supplies the gaps that the "spirit control" of the medium leaves. This filling in is analogous to the creation of a complete perception from inadequate data in the sensory world.<sup>34</sup>

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30. Podmore, op. cit., p. 162.

31. Joseph Dunninger, How to Make a Ghost Walk (New York: David Kemp & Co., 1936), p. 82.

32. Ibid., p. 81.

33. Hudson, op. cit., p. 308.

34. Podmore, op. cit., p. 291.





Many spiritualistic phenomena which can not be explained by fraud or the imagination can be interpreted in terms of extrasensory perception or the psychokinetic effect. The wide range of telepathic possibilities can be applied to most instances of medium communication. Extremely difficult cases such as the medium's knowledge of a document of which only the deceased writer was aware, or of a buried treasure known only to one dead, have a possible telepathic interpretation. The mind of the individual could have been an unconscious agent on other minds in psychic accord with it as the document was being written, or as the treasure was being buried.<sup>35</sup> Podmore concludes that trance personalities, supposedly discarnate spirits, have never related anything that was not possibly, or hardly anything that was not probably, in the mind of some living person or persons.<sup>36</sup> The cross correspondences conducted between mediums being investigated by the early British Society, supposedly made possible by a mediating spirit, could be explained as the action of the one medium's mind upon the other.<sup>37</sup> Spirit predictions could be identified with the medium's precognitive abilities.

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35. Lodge, op. cit., p. 120.

36. Podmore, op. cit., p. 312.

37. Ibid., p. 245.





The memory of the subconscious mind, so far as can be determined, is perfect. Things forgotten in the conscious mind slip into the subconscious mind where they remain until recalled into the conscious mind. This vast store of knowledge, forgotten perhaps even beyond recognition by the sitter, is available to the medium by telepathy.<sup>38</sup> This possibility is enhanced by the fact that repressed thoughts are more easily transferred than are those in focus of the conscious mind.

Poltergeist phenomena and other spirit powers which cause effects beyond normal comprehension have an interpretation in the psychokinetic effect. A prophet warned the Inca chief, Montezuma, of the fate he would receive from the visiting white men. He told him he would be burned about the head. As the monarch looked in the mirror following this prophecy, he noticed for the first time that his nose was distinctly burned.<sup>39</sup> The lesions in the palms of St. Francis of Assisi and others who meditated prolongedly on the crucifixion of Christ, are other examples of mind's effect on matter. The psychokinetic effect, demonstrated in the control of rolling dice, has a direct application to these physical phenomena which have no perceptible cause save mental concentration.

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38. Hudson, op. cit., p. 217.

39. Lang, Cock Lane and Common Sense, p. 215.





Driesch, either discounting or unaware of extensive telepathy or precognition, offers two theories to explain the medium's knowledge of things unknown to any living person. These are a plan-bearing cosmic consciousness or discarnate spirits.<sup>40</sup> Osty and James supported the view of the cosmic consciousness.<sup>41</sup> The medium's mind, in this interpretation, instead of receiving its information telepathically from other human minds, receives it from the storehouse of information in the cosmic consciousness.

Joad has a complicated theory involving a psychic factor with which to interpret spiritualist communications. According to this theory, the human mind is the result of the combination of a brain and a psychic factor. At death the psychic factor is released from the combination. When the medium attempts to communicate with the deceased, the psychic factor of the deceased combines temporarily with the brain of the medium. It is neither the mind of the deceased or the mind of the medium, but a new mind. The psychic factor is particularly active immediately following its release, which would explain the predominance of communications from the recently departed.<sup>42</sup>

This theory offers an explanation of the extrasensory

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40. Driesch, Psychical Research, p. 143.

41. Loc. cit.

42. Joad, "Adventures in Psychical Research," Part II, Harpers (July, 1938), pp. 207-8.

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40. Driscoll, Psychical Research, p. 143.

41. ibid., p. 144.

42. Load, "Advances in Psychical Research," Part II, Harper's (July, 1933), pp. 207-8.



lucidity of the dying. As the psychic factor is about to be released from its combination with the brain, the limitations of the combination are gradually transcended and the individual experiences extended powers normally withheld from him. He can see his entire life in an instant and has the ability to communicate directly with minds at a distance.<sup>43</sup>

Heard compares the spiritualist medium to the witch of antiquity. He sees her as a drag in the evolutionary development of the human being, because of her particular use of psychic powers. He feels her personality is similar to that of the witch, having a hostile and morbid tone.<sup>44</sup> Her use of psychical powers is of that secretive, occult nature that has kept these powers under the cloud of suspicion.

These various attempts to explain the function of the spiritualist medium have been presented because they each make what in my opinion is a contribution to the complete understanding of the phenomena. None of these interpretations are complete in themselves, their combined use affords an advance in understanding the medium.

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43. Ibid., p. 210.

44. Heard, op. cit., p. 308.





## III. CONDITIONS FAVORING PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA

Though psychical phenomena are only slightly under conscious control there are conditions associated with the consciousness of an individual which favor their occurrence. Psi abilities are apparently dormant until some particular occasion causes their entrance into consciousness.<sup>45</sup> Conditions bringing psi into action are either those arresting the activity of the conscious mind or those of some unusual stress.<sup>46</sup>

a. Sleep. The period immediately preceeding sleep is the period when visions or mind pictures often occur. During sleep one may experience psi through the dream. In both of these conditions the conscious mind is in a passive state.<sup>47</sup>

b. Certain drugs. Drugs that dull the focus of the conscious mind and leave it open to the influence of the mind's other dimensions, favor the occurrence of psi.<sup>48</sup>

c. Psychic trauma. Psychic trauma leaves the mind of the individual in a state of shock. This state, like other conditions of stress apparently is favorable for psi activity.<sup>49</sup>

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45. Bendit, op. cit., p. 45.

46. Loc. cit.

47. Loc. cit.

48. Loc. cit.

49. Loc. cit.





d. Danger of death to one in rapport. Those with whom an individual is in psysical accord often have a communication which is extrasensory. If one with whom an individual is in accord should be in danger, injured, or near death, there is a possibility that that individual will receive the impression of the distress. He may have an exact clairvoyant picture of the trouble, or he may only be aware of an inexplicable condition of mental anguish.<sup>50</sup>

e. Lucidity of the dying. When an individual is at the point of death, it often seems he is obtaining his release from sensory limitations, and is able to see his whole life in a flash or has other feats of extrasensory perception.<sup>51</sup>

Conditions which are unfavorable for psi activity are those which cause a sharp focus of conscious attention.

a. Grief. Maimonides, the Hebrew scholar, stated that the Hebrew canonical prophets lost their power of prophecy when in grief. The Talmud had the saying that the prophet who was sad received no inspiration.<sup>52</sup> Grief preoccupies a person to the extent that his conscious mind has no rest, and can disintegrate the personality, so that no condition of relaxed consciousness is possible.

b. Anger. Anger is an emotional condition which

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50. Lodge, op. cit., p. 38.

51. Ibid., p. 146.

52. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination, p. 210.





greatly agitates the mind, destroying any semblance of passivity. It is for this reason unfavorable to the occurrence of psi experience.<sup>53</sup>

c. Worry. Worry, as grief, is an obsession of the conscious mind which gives it no rest. It prevents any relaxing of its attention, and therefore is unfavorable to the occurrence of psi.<sup>54</sup>

Rollo May compares the conditions favoring telepathy to those which develop empathy. Both telepathy and rapport are too creative to be controlled by volition to any marked extent, and a conscious striving for them can block their happening. If the conditions are met, the mind will respond. Both are most sensitive to stimulants.<sup>55</sup> The fact that the conditions for developing empathy and the conditions favoring telepathic communications are practically identical, is one reason that a condition of empathy between two individuals is a most favorable situation for their telepathic communication.

Murphy has done a great deal of study on cases of spontaneous psychical phenomena. The result of that study is his conviction that the need of the individual is a significant factor in his having a psychical experience.

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53. Loc. cit.

54. Garrett, op. cit., p. 7.

55. Rollo May, The Art of Counseling (Nashville: The Cokesbury Press, 1939), pp. 83-84.





Psi activity arises from human motives.<sup>56</sup> These motives, Murphy conjectures, are strong enough to select and organize these psychical experiences "with a very vigorous autistic determination." Individual needs are directly related to individual diversities in paranormal impressions.<sup>57</sup>

Murphy has distinguished seven needs or motives which may determine the occurrence and variety of paranormal perception. They are: 1. Love--the need for contact. 2. Self protection. 3. Ego, including guilt feelings and the need for self justification. 4. Money or material gain. 5. Curiosity. 6. Agent's need to make contact. 7. Motive strong from point of view of both the agent and the percipient.<sup>58</sup>

If as Murphy believes, psi is activated by a sense of need, and the manifestation it assumes is also selected by that need, then psi activities are either goals toward which an individual strives, or are a means of reaching those goals. These goals are objects or experiences which the individual values.<sup>59</sup> Whether the psi experience is an

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56. Gardner Murphy, "Removal of Impediments to the Paranormal," The Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research, Vol. 38 (1944), p. 23.

57. Murphy, "Psychic Phenomena and Human Needs," Ibid., Vol. 37, (1943), p. 190.

58. Ibid., pp. 163-191.

59. P. E. Johnson, Psychology of Religion, (New York: Abington-Cokesbury Press, 1945), pp. 33-49.





instrumental value or an intrinsic value, its nature would indicate that its value is spiritual. Seeking contact with powers outside the realm of the physical world is a religious quest and is directly connected with antiquity's need for the prophet.

#### IV. INTROSPECTIVE DESCRIPTION OF PSYCHICAL EXPERIENCE

The introspective descriptions of those who experience psi phenomena are helpful in our understanding of them. Garrett, the professed medium, has described both her clairvoyant and telepathic experiences. The clairvoyant picture occurs with such definiteness and vividness that its impression remains distinct for a long time. The figures of the imagination lack definiteness and are constantly changing from their type.<sup>60</sup> Her telepathic experiences are preceded by both mental and physical feelings of strangeness, as though something different were about to happen. The telepathic impression itself is differentiated from an ordinary or subconscious thought with the same distinction as knowing is separated from thinking.<sup>61</sup>

The common claim of those having psi experience is

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60. Garrett, op. cit., p. 175.

61. Loc. cit.





their assertion of certainty. The modes of extrasensory perception convey to their percipient, knowledge of more certain character than do the sensory organs. With psi it is not a question of thinking or observing, it is a question of knowing.<sup>62</sup>

Psi phenomena are accompanied by emotional responses. The emotional content of the phenomena heightens its receptivity.<sup>63</sup> In his investigation with individuals who experience psi spontaneously, Bendit, a medical doctor, observed what he felt was "mood contagion." He had patients who became inexplicably depressed. The cure was not effected until it was discovered that these depressions always occurred in the presence of a close associate. When the patient began investigating this clue, it was found that the husband, wife, or other close associate invariably was also depressed. When the patient realized that the mood was possibly coming from the other person, it gradually began to disperse, and over a period of time, with further collaboration of the theory, disappeared entirely.<sup>64</sup>

This paranormal transfer of emotion has been noticed when only material objects are present. A sensitive person,

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62. Alexis Carrel, Man the Unknown (New York: Harper & Bros., 1935), p. 125.

63. Garrett, op. cit., p. 7.

64. Bendit, op. cit., p. 41.





entering a room where tragedy has occurred, even though unaware of the background of the room, often has unaccountable feelings of distress.<sup>65</sup> Commenting on this phenomenon, Lodge asks, "Is there any trace of that agony present still, and able to be appreciated by an attuned or receptive mind?"<sup>66</sup>

## V. THE PHENOMENON OF PREDICTION

The psi phenomenon of prediction, because of its prominence and because of its particular significance to this study, merits special treatment. Saltmarsh, late research officer of the British Society, concludes:

We take our stand firmly on the empirically established fact that apparently supernormal precognitions do occur, and that they imply that conscious contact is sometimes made with the future.<sup>67</sup>

Psi phenomena frequently cover gaps in time either into the past or into the future, through an extrasensory perception which is also supra-temporal.<sup>68</sup>

The dream is a well known channel of predictive psi. Jung describes a case of a warning dream which is hardly distinguishable from precognition. Commenting on the practical helps for doctors in dreams, Jung states that dream

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65. Lodge, op. cit., p. 95.

66. Loc. cit.

67. H. F. Saltmarsh, "Report on Cases of Apparent Precognition," Proceedings, Vol. 42, (1934), p. 74.

68. Bendit, op. cit., p. 35.

entering a room where tragedy has occurred, even though unaware of the background of the room, often has unconscious-like feelings of distress.<sup>65</sup> Commenting on this phenomenon, Lodge asks, "Is there any trace of that agony present still, and able to be appreciated by an attuned or receptive mind?"<sup>66</sup>

## V. THE PHENOMENON OF PRECOGNITION

The psi phenomenon of precognition, because of its prominence and because of its particular significance to this study, merits special treatment. Salterman, like research officer of the British Society, concludes:

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psi phenomena frequently cover gaps in time either into the past or into the future, through an extraordinary perception which is also supra-temporal.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Lodge, op. cit., p. 95.  
<sup>66</sup> Ibid. cit.  
<sup>67</sup> H. F. Salterman, "Report on Cases of Apparent Precognition," *Proceedings*, Vol. 43, (1934), p. 74.  
<sup>68</sup> Bessie, op. cit., p. 33.



analysis is sometimes a matter of life and death. To illustrate his point he relates the dream of a professional friend of his. The friend dreamed that he was climbing a mountain up and up until he ascended into a feeling of ecstasy. On listening to the dream, Jung warned his friend, whose hobby was mountain climbing to take two guides with him in his future climbing, and to follow explicitly their instructions. The friend scoffed at the advice. Two months later he narrowly escaped death through a fall and subsequent avalanche. Three months later he was killed in a mountain fall, when he "actually stepped out into the air." Jung concludes, "That was ecstasis in the fullest meaning of the word."<sup>69</sup>

Another instance of predictive dream was that experienced by Mark Twain. He dreamt he saw his brother in a metallic coffin. The dream was so vivid that he had a difficult time convincing himself upon awakening that it was a dream. The following day the ship on which his brother had been stationed blew up in harbor. The brother was killed. When Twain arrived, that which he saw was the scene of his dream. His brother lay in the metallic coffin and the surroundings of the room were identical.<sup>70</sup>

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69. C. G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1933), p. 18.

70. Murphy, "Psychic Phenomena and Human Needs," The Journal of the American Society of Psychical Research, p. 175.





The predictive dream has a personal reference.

My wife has many times experienced dreams which she has felt were predictive, examples of which are the following. During the summer of 1947 we were living in Boston, Mass. Late in July while searching for a theme for a fantasy composition which my wife was planning to write in preparation for a class in composition, I thought of dreams. I mentioned Kant's Dreams of a Spirit Seer. I was groping for a title which would describe the most fantastic of dreams. Finally I said, "the dreams of a rum guzzling neurotic." So far as I know I had never heard or thought the expression before. The process seemed wholly creative. Rather startled my wife asked where I had gotten that theme. Surprised at her unusual interest I replied that I had made it up. The following is her description of why she was startled by my suggestion.

During the previous night in a dream or semi-wakened state I remembered my husband saying to me, "a rum guzzling neurotic," to which I replied, "Where did you get that?" The answer was a surprised, "I made it up." This was all that occurred. All that was given were the words and the characters, with no reference to time, place or motivation. I had completely forgotten this until I heard my husband say, "rum guzzling neurotic," the next day. Involuntarily I asked, "Where did you get that?" From the dream I remembered that his voice would sound surprised, and would answer, "I made it up." And it happened.

Another striking example of her predictive experiences occurred a few days later. She relates:





Twice during the week I received the impression of the words, "red lacquer," with the impression of a distinct color. With this impression, but separate from it, came the image of a red oriental chest. The second time this occurred, it was exactly the same except that I recalled in the dream that I had had this impression before. In the dream I was trying to tell someone about it. I had completely forgotten these mental impressions and would never have recalled them, had I not gone with a group of Boston University students to the Longfellow House in Cambridge. There in the dining room was a red lacquer Chinese altar, brought from China by Longfellow's eldest son. It was the exact shape of what I had taken for a chest in my dream. The color of the lacquer was the distinctive shade of red which I had perceived in the impression, "red lacquer." The latter part of the dream, trying to describe the chest to someone, never occurred.

She readily distinguishes between a subconscious dream or thought and a precognitive one. The subconscious dreams have a setting and have some sequence of progress. The precognitive dream is a detached image or impression, a vivid fragment, with only the subsequent fulfilment to complete the meaning.

The communications of the spiritualist mediums have at times been predictive. Lyttleton relates the case of a medium in trance who claimed to mediate for a discarnate spirit. The information was supposedly concerning the present and past. It was later found that the "spirit control" was alive, and that the information was really concerning the future.<sup>71</sup>

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71. Lyttleton, op. cit., p. 176.





The medium, Mrs. Gladys Osborne Leonard, often tested by the British Society investigators, predicted through her spirit control, Feda, that Dr. John Thomas, prominent British Society research officer, would soon experience sudden death. The information was supposedly from his deceased wife. The prediction was known only to the sitter, also a research officer, who recorded it. Three years later Thomas was killed in an auto accident, and the prediction was published in The Proceedings.<sup>72</sup>

There have been notable predictions by prophets of more modern times. Joan of Arc knew through her predictive powers that she had only a little over a year for her task. Forman states that whatever she announced was about to occur, happened.<sup>73</sup>

The predictions of Nostradamus drew the attention of the leading personages of his day. People came from all over Europe to have this most fabulous prophet of recent centuries divine their future.

Tennyson, previously described as a poet in touch with extrasensory resources, enhanced his prophetic powers by his prediction in "Locksley Hall."

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72. L. Allison, "Prediction," The Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research, Vol. 37 (1943), pp. 84-85.

73. Forman, The Story of Prophecy, p. 137.





Men, my brother, men the workers, ever reaping  
 something new,  
 That which they have done but earnest of the things  
 that they shall do.

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
 Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder that  
 would be.

Saw the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd  
 a ghastly dew  
 From the nations airy navies grappling in the central  
 blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the southwind  
 rushing warm,  
 With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the  
 thunderstorm;

Till the war drum throbbed no longer, and the battle  
 flags were furl'd  
 In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful  
 realm in awe,  
 And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal  
 law.<sup>74</sup>

The nineteenth century in which Tennyson lived knew nothing  
 of the airplane, let alone of "grappling airy navies." It  
 knew nothing of the world wars or world leagues of nations.  
 Tennyson "dip't into the future" for these concepts, probably  
 through an experience similar to that he described in  
 "Ancient Sage."<sup>75</sup>

The psychical phenomenon of prediction is a rather  
 common experience in India, according to Akhilananda. He

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74. Wm. J. Rolfe, editor, Select Poems of Alfred Lord Tennyson (Boston: James R. Osgood & Co., 1885), pp. 104-105.

75. See Chapter III page 86 of this dissertation.





states that in that ancient land many people perceive future events, such as death and disease, with no possible contact with those occurrence other than extrasensory perception.<sup>76</sup>

There are several notable theories which have been advanced to aid our understanding of prediction. Lodge anticipated these theories when he described the medium's knowledge of a document inclosed in metal as having been perceived in some unknown or four dimensional way by the subliminal self.<sup>77</sup> Dunne proposes the theory of Serialism, which is based on this fourth dimension. The essence of the theory is that the brain adapts the individual to a three dimensional universe, and that when the brain is asleep, the individual is exposed to a four dimensional universe. This fourth dimension, time, is measured by individual traveling fields, arranged in serials, which are kept in rigid past, present and future categories by the influence of the brain. Even when the brain is asleep, its interpretation usually continues through force of habit. When the brain is relaxed and the interpretive influence of the brain is actually set aside, the categories in which the brain placed the time traveling fields are frequently observed to break down--since their only rigidity lay in the brain's

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76. Akhilananda, op. cit., p. 145.

77. Lodge, op. cit., p. 124.





interpretive influence. Time fields of the future are frequently observed as naturally as those of the present and past.<sup>78</sup> Hence the predictive dream and predictions of semi-wakened conditions. Dunne's summation is as follows:

By determinedly refusing to attend to these readily proffered images, attention in field 1 could be completely discontinued. And, in the rare instants when this was successfully effected, attention in field 2 was free, as in dreams, to slip away along associational tracks extending elsewhere than in the time 1 "present moment."<sup>79</sup>

Professors Broad and Price have proposed another hypothesis, which, in criticism of Dunne's serial arrangement of time, presents time as two dimensional in itself. Prevision in this theory takes place in this second dimension of time which is at right angles to the first, and operative in a different plane.<sup>80</sup>

Myers had a theory which was much less complicated than those of relativist framework. He simply divides himself into a transcendental self and an empirical self. The transcendental self perceives without the media necessary for the perception of the empirical self. It is not limited by the various rates of retardation that the empirical self,<sup>81</sup> by virtue of the nature of its *modi operandi*, must tolerate.

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78. Dunne, An Experiment With Time, pp. 91-208.

79. Ibid., p. 162.

80. Soal and Goldney, "Experiments in Pre-Cognitive Telepathy," The Proceedings for the Society for Psychical Research, p. 28.

81. Lodge, *op. cit.*, p. 163.





Saltmarsh rated the frequency of his cases of spontaneous prediction in the following order of decreasing occurrence: 1. dream. 2. vision. 3. mediumistic. 4. impression. 5. borderland (semi-wakened). 6. crystal.<sup>82</sup>

He believes that if we were able to interpret better our dream symbols, we would find many more instances of prediction.<sup>83</sup> He found the prediction which occurred the most frequently was death.<sup>84</sup>

Saltmarsh worked out a detailed theory to explain prediction. He observed that prediction takes place in a state of dissociation, when the conscious mind is at rest. He concludes from this that the subliminal region of the mind is the one active in prediction.<sup>85</sup> The subliminal operates through other channels than the normal sense.<sup>86</sup> Even as the length of the "specious present" of the conscious or supraliminal mind has duration, so the "specious present" of the subliminal has duration. The length of this duration runs parallel to the duration--hence there is no limit.<sup>87</sup> Therefore what is predictive for the supraliminal is merely present for the subliminal. These predictive

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82. Saltmarsh, "Report on Cases of Apparent Precognition," The Proceedings for the Society for Psychical Research, p. 28.

83. Ibid., p. 58.

84. Ibid., p. 56.

85. Ibid., p. 52.

86. Ibid., p. 84.

87. Ibid., p. 85.





perceptions of the subliminal mind emerge above the threshold into consciousness as any other passage from the subliminal.<sup>88</sup> His theory fits only cases of prediction of determined events. He believes that the conscious present determines in part the conscious future, and therefore only that future which has been effected by the events of the present can be perceived by the subliminal mind. Saltmarsh does not believe that prediction of non-determined events can occur.<sup>89</sup> With as wide a description of determination in future events as Saltmarsh allows I would wonder what a non-determined event without any causation in the past, could be?

These theories have been presented not because I accept them, but because they show the direction into which the data for precognition are increasingly forcing our thinking. These theories though they appear quite diverse, are really different ways of expressing the same essential thought, namely that the human mind has the ability to reach over the barrier separating the present from the future in ways which the categories set up by the nervous system of brain and sense organs could not allow under present knowledge. I do not believe these theories explain adequately. They are merely philosophical descriptions of an inexplicable

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88. Ibid., p. 83.

89. Ibid., pp. 82-92.

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phenomena. They are pioneer attempts to meet a reality which has no place in our present system of thought.

## VI. ON THE TRANCE

The trance is commonly the mode in which professional, spiritualist and other professed mediums function. The trance is a stuporous condition in which the animation of the individual is partly suspended. The body and mind appear lifeless except for the activity of psi. The majority of these trance states are self induced. The medium feels he can only function in such a condition. These states vary from the totally unconscious condition of Edgar Cayce to the only slightly dissociated state of the cross correspondence mediums of the early British Society.

Mohammed at times experienced the trance state in his revelations. When Aisha his wife had been accused of adultery, Mohammed confronted her for the truth. When she denied her guilt, Mohammed went into a trance like state. He seemed unconscious. At the same time Aisha's mind became tranquil as she felt she was about to be vindicated from Heaven. When he recovered, he wiped the perspiration from his face and said, "Aisha, rejoice! Verily the Lord hath declared thine innocence."<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>. Sir Wm. Muir, The Life of Mohammed rev. ed., (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1923), pp. 300-302.





Though the necessity of the trance for the operation of psi may be questioned in individual cases, its need in the case of Cayce is obvious.<sup>91</sup> He is one of the most outstanding of trance mediums. Although the deep state of his trance made him unconscious of any activity in that condition, his mediation was in many ways similar to that of the prophets. He disclaimed any contact with spirits and insisted that all communications which he uttered in his trances were ultimately from God. As a child he experienced those first instances of his psychical abilities which isolated him from "normal" people.<sup>92</sup> The possession of these powers frightened him, and he prayed that God would either justify them or remove them.<sup>93</sup>

Cayce was spontaneously overcome by trance conditions which often left him with no sign of life for hours.<sup>94</sup> During these trances he discovered he had clairvoyant powers. He later found that he could put himself into a trance by auto-suggestion. If he concentrated upon any particular subject as he put himself in trance, his clairvoyant powers operated on that subject during the time that he was unconscious. He discovered that he could diagnose illness

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91. Thomas Sugrue, There Is a River (New York: Henry Holt Co., 1942), p. 160.

92. Ibid., p. 64.

93. Ibid., p. 126.

94. Ibid., p. 153.





either in himself or others in this way. He also prescribed treatment. Someone of course had to take down what he said in these clairvoyant trances, for he knew nothing of them when he awoke. The success of these diagnoses and treatments gained him much publicity, and he kept "clairvoyant appointments" with sick people all over the country. He set up headquarters in Virginia Beach, Virginia in 1928 and continued in his capacity of clairvoyant healer and counselor until his death in 1945.<sup>95</sup>

I have visited Cayce's headquarters in Virginia Beach. Cayce had been dead two years, but an association is preserving and tabulating his "readings." I talked with Cayce's son, Hugh Lynn Cayce, and with others who had acted as amanuenses during the readings, one of whom is a personal friend. As Rhine has observed, when strangers report these phenomenal cases, it is much easier to be skeptical than when they come from trusted friends.<sup>96</sup> My conclusions of Cayce are as follows.

He possessed strong clairvoyant powers which he discovered early in life. He was capable of the extreme degree of dissociation of the trance. In his trance he seemed wholly under the control of paranormal powers. He could

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95. Ibid., pp. 200-442.

96. Rhine, "The Relationship Between Psychology and Religion," Broadcast Talk over Town Hall of the Air, World Faith Round Table Series, June 11, 1946, p. 4.





dissociate his consciousness at will. In his self-induced trance he could clairvoyantly perceive that to which he directed this perception immediately preceeding the trance. In diagnosing an illness he appeared actually to be looking at a dissected body. He used technical medical terms with accuracy, and was unable to recognize or define these words upon awakening. He had no education which could have qualified him for this anatomical knowledge. He was completely unaware of what he had said in his trance upon awakening. The treatments he prescribed were of all types, specializing in messages, herb medicines and poultices. Many remarkable cures were effected by him in this manner. In other instances he seemed to fail. He considered his abilities gifts from God to be used by him for the services of mankind. Frequently in his readings he counseled the distressed and perplexed, and usually coupled his physical treatment of an illness with the spiritual treatment of the soul. He had an excellent understanding of the psychosomatic nature of illness. His counsel was usually religious in nature, and stressed the universality of God's love. His readings on spiritual counsel have been published under the title, A Search for God.<sup>97</sup> These spiritual counsels were given while he was in trance to specific individuals keeping appointments,

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97. Edgar Cayce, A Search for God (Virginia Beach, Va.: The Association for Research and Enlightenment, 1942).





as he was under the influence of the power which possessed him. The following selection from these counsels shows the understanding the trance personality had of the prophetic and mystical state of relaxed concentration.

Meditation is the emptying of ourselves of all that hinders the Creative Force from rising along the natural channels of our physical bodies to be disseminated through the sensitive spiritual centers in our physical bodies. When meditation is properly entered into, we are made stronger mentally and physically. . . .

Meditation is not musing or day-dreaming, but attuning our mental and physical bodies to their spiritual source. It is arousing the mental and spiritual attributes to an expression of their relationship with their Maker. This is true meditation.

Meditation is prayer from within the inner self, and partakes not only of the inner physical man but of the soul aroused by the spirit from within. In prayer we speak to God, in meditation God speaks to us.<sup>98</sup>

Cayce's description of sick bodies could be understood on the basis of clairvoyance if it were not for the knowledge he displayed of the human body. If it did not come from his own mind, it must have come from another mind. The theory of a storehouse of knowledge, a cosmic consciousness, as mentioned by James, seems to me best to fit this case. Experiencing the cosmic consciousness is reaching out beyond self to a greater self, a larger consciousness.<sup>99</sup>

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98. Ibid., p. 6.

99. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, p. 389.





Cayce's powers contacting the object in question would have perceived only what Cayce would have perceived had he been at the scene. A cosmic consciousness penetrating Cayce's mind could have given the technical description that Cayce transcribed.

Andrew Jackson Davis, the Poughkeepsie seer of the nineteenth century functioned similarly to Cayce. He is considered one of the founders of modern spiritualism. As Cayce, wholly uneducated in medicine he could see the interior of bodies, diagnose disease and prescribe treatment, all to the amazement of physicians.<sup>100</sup>

Modern wonder men such as Cayce and Davis, in their contact of what seems to be a cosmic consciousness through powers of extrasensory perception lead us to a direct application of these powers to religious prophecy.

## VII. PROPHETS AS POSSESSORS OF EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION

a. The opinions of others. Before making my own applications and deductions of the prophets as possessors of extrasensory perception, I shall mention the opinions of others on the subject. Lyttleton asserts that the Hebrew

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<sup>100</sup>. Forman, op. cit., p. 306.





prophets were inspired in the same way as people today who have been endowed with "what is called a psychic factor."<sup>101</sup> The Swiss theologian von Orelli terms Israel's prophecy the highest development of prophecy because in it extrasensory powers were ennobled by their consecrated use.<sup>102</sup> Rhine anticipates that he might find a good subject in the religious prophet for extrasensory investigation.<sup>103</sup>

Davidson stated that there is no scientific proof of the existence of an extrasensory perception. He felt there were too many prophets to have such a rare endowment. He believed an extrasensory faculty was too blind and irrational to be possessed by the great prophets. Davidson's inaccuracies, both in data and interpretation of extrasensory perception are due to the fact that he wrote twenty years ago.<sup>104</sup> A rather indirect reference to the prophet's use of extrasensory perception comes from Pfeiffer. Describing the possibility of Ezekiel's perception of Jerusalem from Babylon, he states that either certain statements describing the incident are fiction, or the occasion be explained through

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101. Lyttleton, Our Superconscious Mind, p. 193.

102. von Orelli, "Prophecy," Schaff-Herzog, Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1911), Vol. 9, p. 272.

103. Rhine, Extrasensory Perception, p. 166.

104. A. B. Davidson, "Prophecy," James Hastings, ed., Dictionary of the Bible (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1904), Vol. 4, pp. 120-121.





"parapsychic phenomena."<sup>105</sup> It is the attempt of this thesis to show cause for the choice of the latter.

b. Distinction between a counselor, seer, or prophet. The prophet was not merely a spiritual leader and counselor. The distinction between a prophet or seer and a counselor is shown in the history of Israel. In the reign of David, Nathan was the prophet, Gad the seer, and Ahithophel, the counselor. While the functions of Gad and Nathan are similar, there is a slight distinction in them. While Gad is frequently spoken of as the prophet Gad, David's seer, Nathan is only the prophet. Gad was evidently hired by David because of his clairvoyant abilities, which he respected as channels of divine guidance. Nathan, as all true prophets in Israel, could be hired by no man, but was in all respects a man of God, who communicated whatever message he received from Yahweh to whomever it concerned. That "the word of the Lord" came unto him at night is indicative of the paranormal character of his mediation.<sup>106</sup> Because he was respected as one uniquely in communion with the deity, he could point the finger of accusation at King David and bring him to sack cloth and ashes.<sup>107</sup> Ahithophel was David's counselor. His was intellectual wisdom.<sup>108</sup>

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105. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 536.

106. II Sam. 7:1-4.

107. II Sam. 12.

108. II Sam. 15:12.





His wisdom was so respected that it "was as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God."<sup>109</sup> Inquiring of the prophet was inquiring at the oracle of God. His was revelation paranormally perceived from the deity.

The prophet's capacity for paranormal perception was not merely the capacity for clairvoyant and telepathic powers. It also included the capacity for directing those powers to the cosmic or divine consciousness.<sup>110</sup> The development of this capacity through the prophet's religious practices frequently startled the prophet by its entrance into his consciousness.<sup>111</sup> As with Cayce's powers, the prophet's ability seemed to pursue him rather than he consciously pursuing them.<sup>112</sup> Mohammed is the outstanding exception to this statement, in that he actively sought his revelation experiences.<sup>113</sup> The mediocrity of the sons of the prophets is evidence for the inability of cultivation alone to account for the feats of the prophets. These group prophets may have come from prophets' families, they may have had powers of telepathy and clairvoyance, they

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109. II Sam. 16:23.

110. Franklin Johnson, The New Psychic Studies in Their Relation to Christian Thought, p. 55.

111. Jere. 1:6.

112. Amos 7:14,15.

113. P. E. Johnson, "Mohammedanism," Ferm, The Encyclopedia of Religion, p. 500.





may have developed the ecstatic frenzy or trance to its most extreme form, but so far as we know no representative of these groups has ever become a great prophet. The great prophet did not join the guilds to become a prophet. In the majority of instances he had no thought of becoming a prophet until he experienced a call from his God through a psychological experience. As Rowley points out, what made Samuel a prophet was not his parental dedication or his education at the cultic center, but his revelation experience of the will of his God, occasioned by no voluntary encouragement. The prophets' careers began, he continues, "in an experience of inescapable constraint."<sup>114</sup>

These observations are in agreement with my investigations of spontaneous cases of extrasensory perception. Though experimenters and mediums believe that all people have the possibility of cultivating extrasensory perception,<sup>115</sup> I have yet to find a single instance of either a spontaneous experience or laboratory experience of pronounced extrasensory characteristics which was deliberately conditioned by cultivation. On the contrary every subject with decided extrasensory powers, either spontaneously or in the laboratory, of which I am aware--and I have attempted to investigate

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<sup>114</sup>. Rowley, "The Nature of Prophecy In the Light Of Recent Study," Harvard Theological Review, p. 23.(I Sam. Chapters 2 to 7).

<sup>115</sup>. Rhine, Extrasensory Perception, p. 156.





the field thoroughly--has possessed those powers with no voluntary attempt to develop them.

The compelling character of the psychical experience--its apparent invasion of the conscious mind without voluntary encouragement--climaxes the argument that the prophetic function is a capacity not in the endowment of all people. The environmental conditions though necessary for the development of the capacity, have been duplicated in far more people than the comparative few who have manifested psychical abilities, and the extremely limited number of individuals who have the additional ability of directing those powers to a greater consciousness.<sup>116</sup>

The compelling quality of the experience completely changed the prophet's life. It forced him to tasks which he was reluctant to do, and only the force of the experience was responsible for his ultimate obedience. Ezekiel sat in the presence of the people seven days before he could overcome his reluctance to speak to them Yahweh's message.<sup>117</sup> Jeremiah complained that he was too young to obey Yahweh's call.<sup>118</sup> After reluctantly accepting the revelation, he later tried to resign from his role as Yahweh's mediator. The intensity of further revelation experiences forced him

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116. F. Johnson, loc. cit.

117. Ezek. 3:15.

118. Jere. 1:6.





to continue.

Then said I, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forebearing, and I could not stay.<sup>119</sup>

Describing the impression of Yahweh's revelation Isaiah wrote. "The Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand."<sup>120</sup> The prophet did not consciously develop his psychical experiences, rather his psychical experiences seemingly invaded his consciousness, and with compelling power developed the prophet. The counselor functioned through his consciously trained wisdom; the prophet functioned through "invasions" of his consciousness which forced him to counsel. As Strickland says, "He seems to feel himself swayed by powers beyond himself."<sup>121</sup>

c. The prophet's attitude toward his office. The prophet's attitude toward his office was one of fervor and passionate zeal.<sup>122</sup> This zeal, as in the case of Mohammed, was difficult to distinguish from fanaticism. The prophet's more phlegmatic contemporaries often mistook the prophetic fervor for madness. Guillaume describes Ezekiel as possessed by the spirit of prophecy to the extreme that he could not

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<sup>119</sup>. Jere. 20:9.

<sup>120</sup>. Isaiah 8:11.

<sup>121</sup>. Strickland, Psychology of Religious Experience, p. 149.

<sup>122</sup>. Loc. cit.





control himself.<sup>123</sup>

The prophet was continually conscious of communion with the deity. His entire task was a cooperation with God. This rapport was developed to the extent that the prophet often spoke as though he were God. The oracles of Malachi contain several debates between Yahweh and his people in which the prophet takes Yahweh's part in the first person singular.<sup>124</sup> "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings."<sup>125</sup> This rapport with his God is comparable to the subject's rapport with the experimenter in psychical research. Cooperation between the subject and experimenter is favorable for the occurrence of extrasensory perception in the laboratory. Cooperation between the prophet and the object to which his psychical powers are directed, by this same principle would stimulate the operation of those powers.

A condition previously described as favorable to the occurrence of extrasensory perception in the laboratory is the subject's belief in his ability. The "sheep" are almost certain to score higher than the "goats." It is doubtful if anyone has ever possessed more confidence in his psychical

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123. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination, p. 158.

124. Mal. 2:13-17; 3:7-18.

125. Ibid., 3:8.





powers than the prophet. There is no evidence that either he or his society ever questioned his abilities in extra-sensory perception. The prophet was the perfect specimen of the "sheep." When the son of the Shunammite had died, she journeyed to the prophet Elisha in Mt. Carmel. As she approached him she fell at his feet in agony. Gehazi, the servant attempted to push her aside, but Elisha forbade him, saying, "Her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me and hath not told me."<sup>126</sup> The inference is that Elisha had been accustomed to receiving information extra-sensorially, and his ignorance in this particular instance caused him concern.

The experimenter in the laboratory tries many ways to motivate his subject to score well. He knows that motivation for the test is a favorable factor for positive results. The prophet had his motivation. He believed he was executing the will of God. He felt he had experienced a call from God to function as a channel for revelation to mankind. A sense of a divine calling to an office is one of the strongest motivations for the able execution of that office. The emphasis on the will of Allah in Mohammedanism had its beginnings in the Prophet's conviction that his entire mission was obedience to the call of Allah to be the greatest of the prophets.

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<sup>126</sup>. II Kings 4:27.





d. The prophet as a good subject for extrasensory research. The personality conducive to positive extrasensory scoring in laboratory tests is one that is well adjusted. The prophet is outstanding for his well adjusted personality. His honesty with his God released him from repression. His guilt feelings having been resolved, he was free from obsessions and phobias. Any fear he may have had was quickly counteracted by his strong trust in his God. Focusing his attention on his divine mission for his God and his people, relieved him from self centeredness. His purpose in life was altruistic.<sup>127</sup>

A particular attribute of the well adjusted personality tending to raise extrasensory scoring in the laboratory is unaffectedability. The individual easily swayed by adverse suggestion rarely scores positively. The nature of the prophet's mission necessitated his unaffectedable character. He often had to denounce his countrymen, condemn national policies, threaten disaster. Amos left his herd in the hill country of Judah to travel to Bethel in the northern Kingdom of Israel to preach his oracle of condemnation. His message made enemies. He was reported to the king as an enemy conspirator and seditionist. In the midst of this increasing tension Amaziah the priest of Bethel suggested to Amos that he escape while he could and return to his homeland. There

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<sup>127</sup>. Isaiah 6.





he could make a comfortable living through his prophesying. A rugged shepherd was out of place in the king's chapel. The prophet's reply is another oracle predicting captivity for Israel. The suggestion and threat appear never to have received a moment's consideration.<sup>128</sup> Like his predecessors and successors, Amos was certain of a divine direction, and no threat or suggestion of any kind could disturb this assurance.

Self-consciousness is an unfavorable condition for the occurrence of extrasensory perception. It tends to divide the subject's attention and hinder entries from the other dimensions of the mind. A study of the writings of the prophets discloses that the prophets were so rapt in their psychical experiences or their oracles that they rarely had occasion to be conscious of their own persons. This lack of self-consciousness is shown in their frequent assumption of the first person singular in their references to God. His own personality had receded into the background and only God and the people occupied the focus of his attention. He was conscious of himself only as a mouth piece of God. Isaiah wrote, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord, will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake

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<sup>128</sup>. Amos 7:16-17.





them."<sup>129</sup> The prophet has relegated his own personality to the background.

The prophet is a good subject for extrasensory research because he practiced the mystical formula which prepares the way for the occurrence of this perception. The prophet observed a regulated devotional life. He had his times when he meditated upon spiritual truths, worshipped his God and prayed. During these periods his mind was in that condition of relaxed concentration, so conducive to the entry of psi. He was preparing his mind according to the same principles that the subject observes in psychical research and the medium, in preparation for spirit contact, and the clairvoyant who is about to perceive his picture.

That which furnished his enemies with an opportunity against the prophet Daniel, was his devotional life. Three times a day he went to his house, opened his windows toward Jerusalem, and knelt in prayer to his God.<sup>130</sup> The direct connection of this devotional habit with the prophet's psychical experiences is shown in his following description of the situation which preceded a prophetic vision.

And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the

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<sup>129</sup>. Isaiah 41:17.

<sup>130</sup>. Dan. 6:10.





vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.<sup>131</sup>

The Old Testament records the spoken prayers of Elijah<sup>132</sup> and Elisha,<sup>133</sup> which immediately preceded their working of wonders. When the enemy was at the gates of the city, Isaiah the prophet and Hezekiah the king "prayed and cried unto heaven."<sup>134</sup> The prophecy of Jeremiah is interspersed with the prophet's prayers of intercession for his people or petitions for his own personal strengthening.<sup>135</sup>

These devotional practices were the prophet's preparation for his inspiration. These were the maturing influences which developed the prophet's constitutional capacity for his reception of revelation. These periods of preparation were necessary for the psychical phenomena of the prophetic function.<sup>136</sup> These were the practices that made his mind receptive to the sensitive impressions which composed his oracle.<sup>137</sup>

That the prophet was accustomed to the use of mental imagery and symbolism is evident throughout his oracles. It is quite likely that this use of images and symbols was

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131. Dan. 9:20-21.

132. I Kings 17:20.

133. II Kings 4:33.

134. II Chron. 32:20.

135. Jere. 14:7-9; 32:16-36.

136. Strickland, op. cit., p. 148.

137. F. B. Meyers, The Prophet of Hope (Chicago: Flemming H. Revell Co., 1900), p. 3.





characteristic of his devotional periods. Concentration on religious images and spiritual symbols is, according to Akhilananda, the ideal condition for perceiving the impressions of other minds.<sup>138</sup>

e. The prophet's working atmosphere. The surrounding conditions which the prophet chose for his devotional activities which led to his experiences of revelation were those especially favorable to the occurrence of extrasensory perception. His was an atmosphere without distraction. The mere distraction of some one entering the test room markedly lowers the scoring of the subject in psychical research. The prophet eliminated distraction by the use of music and by a resort to solitude. When the campaign which the kingdoms of Judah, Israel and Edom were planning against the kingdom of Moab was threatened with disaster due to a water shortage, the kings of Israel and Judah went to the prophet Elisha for an oracle from Yahweh. Elisha asked for a minstrel and "it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him."<sup>139</sup> The sons of the prophets and the tabernacle musicians are described as prophesying with musical instruments.<sup>140</sup>

Music has a relaxing effect on the mind. It reduced the activity of the prophet's mind to the condition of

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138. Akhilananda, Hindu Psychology, p. 136.

139. II Kings 3:15.

140. I Sam. 10:15. I Chron. 25:1.





relaxed concentration which prepares the way for extra-sensory experience. For this reason the seance is often accompanied with a musical background. It aids the medium's mental preparation for her psychical experience. The frequent association of rivers with prophetic vision is of a similar explanation. The sound of the river current would have the same relaxing effect, reducing distraction, as would music. "The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel . . . by the river Chebar."<sup>141</sup> "As I [Daniel] was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel, then I lifted up mine eyes and looked, and behold . . . vision."<sup>142</sup>

The prophets also reduced distraction by meditating in "the night season," or resorting to the surrounding deserts and river banks. It was at night, after he and his three companions had prayed intensely for a revelation, when the city of Babylon was asleep, that Daniel experienced his "night vision" of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.<sup>143</sup> Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, received his revelation concerning the gold plates containing the untranslated book of Mormon, at night. Kneeling beside his bed, asking forgiveness of his sins in the still hours of the evening, he said he saw

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<sup>141</sup>. Ezek. 1:3.

<sup>142</sup>. Dan. 10:4.

<sup>143</sup>. Ibid., 2:19.





the angel Moroni standing before him.<sup>144</sup>

Mohammed had the habit of retiring to a cave in the slope of Mt. Hira near Mecca. It was a lonely barren place. The stillness and harmony of the setting stimulated the prophet to extreme emotional excitement and he uttered incoherent oaths and wild rhapsodical language. It was here that he received many of his revelations.<sup>145</sup>

The prophet's atmosphere was one without restraints. The work of Stuart has shown that restraining the subject's freedom of response in extrasensory experimentation is detrimental to high scoring. The prophet's only superior was his God. The methods he used, though adapted to the beliefs of his culture, were ultimately the methods of his own choosing. He "spoke as the Spirit gave him utterance."<sup>146</sup> Even in New Testament times he was allowed complete freedom of expression in assembly.<sup>147</sup> When he was asked for an oracle, there was no time limit involved, and whatever he spoke was accepted as the desired oracle. Jeremiah waited ten days for an oracle in answer to the alternative question of the Hebrew survivors of the Babylonian conquest.<sup>148</sup> It

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144. F. M. Brodie, No Man Knows My History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), p. 39.

145. Muir, The Life of Mohammad, pp. 37-38.

146. Acts 2:4.

147. Koenig, "Prophecy," Ferm, op. cit., pp. 282-283.

148. Jere. 42:7.





was only when the early Christian Church, due to the danger from the pretender, curbed the freedom of the prophet, that religious prophecy among Christians began to disappear.<sup>149</sup> Freedom in choice of conditions and freedom in response are as important to the prophetic function as they are to the positive scoring in psychical research.

f. Description of the prophet's extrasensory experiences. The prophets in general had psychical experiences. The writers of the ancient records, not knowing our definitions of telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition and postcognition, and writing from a theocentric emphasis have described many of these experiences in ways which make analysis difficult. The most frequent of prophetic experience was the vision of revelation. Except in instances where visions are definitely predictive, we can not strictly classify them to be clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition or postcognition. These terms are definitions of various types of extrasensory perception of objective events or mental activities of other persons. The objectivity of that which the prophet saw or heard in his revelation experiences is difficult to determine. The phenomenon of prophetic inspiration is not one of extrasensory perception of objective events; it is the reception from unknown sources, of knowledge through a paranormal seizure of the personality

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<sup>149</sup>. Koenig, loc. cit.





in its cruder forms, and through a paranormal entry into consciousness in its more advanced modes. The nature of these unknown sources will be discussed in the next chapter. There are those psychical experiences of the prophet however, that appear to be definite instances of extrasensory perception. Several of these have been mentioned in the previous sections of this study.

1. Telenathy. During one of the wars between Syria and Israel the king of Syria had difficulty planning any surprise moves.<sup>150</sup> When in secret council he and his advisors planned to camp their army at a certain site, the Israelites always were aware of their location and the surprise move was defeated. Israel knew of these maneuvers because Elisha the prophet was aware of them and informed the king of Israel. Suspecting a traitor in his secret council, the Syrian king, in frustration, demanded, "Which of us is for the king of Israel?" One of their number answered, "None, my lord, O king! but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber." The expression, "the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber," would seem to be the speaker's figurative way of saying, "thy most private thoughts." Elisha's awareness is credited to his ability to perceive the activities of the Syrian king's mind. What he

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<sup>150</sup>. II Kings 6:8-23.





perceived were the thoughts of the king and not a picture of his council room. It was an instance of telepathy. The data however are not sufficient conclusively to classify this example as telepathy. The speaker could possibly have meant that Elisha was aware of the words which the King of Syria spoke, and in this case, the description is that of clairaudience. The explanation of the speaker need not necessarily be the correct interpretation of Elisha's ability. What we have in the records is that Elisha was aware of the plans of the Syrians as they waged war against Israel. An extrasensory explanation could include telepathy, clairaudience, clairvoyance or precognition, or combinations of these. If in the laboratory it is impossible as yet to test for pure telepathy, it is inso facto even more difficult to label an event in an ancient and incomplete record as telepathic. I believe however, that indications point to telepathy as the more logical interpretation, as there is no reference to Elisha's seeing or hearing an objective event of either the present or the future other than a literal interpretation of an oriental's description.<sup>151</sup>

2. Clairvoyance. The eighth chapter of the prophecy of Ezekiel describes experiences which correspond markedly with clairvoyance. Ezekiel was sitting in his house in Babylon and the elders of Judah in captivity sat before him.

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<sup>151</sup>. I Kings 6:8-12.





They were probably meditating together, seeking an oracle from Yahweh or lamenting their condition as captives and longing for their Hebrew homeland. Ezekiel, in this conducive condition of mind was overcome by impressions of scenes in Jerusalem. The introduction to these scenes is quite visionary, as the prophet feels himself lifted by a lock of his hair through space to Jerusalem. He saw the door to the inner gate of the Temple where the graven image was. Entering the Temple he saw the idols about the walls, and seventy priests burning incense to the idols. He saw women weeping at the north side of the Temple. In the inner court of the sanctuary he watched men worshipping the sun god. These scenes which Ezekiel perceived could have occurred at that very moment at the Temple in Jerusalem. As there were possible objective events to correspond with the psychical experience, this is a possible instance of clairvoyance. Following the scene of the sun god worship, the experience rapidly became visionary, a trend typical of Ezekiel. The events then perceived were those for which objective occurrences were doubtful.<sup>152</sup>

3. Precognition. Guillaume, commenting upon Dunne's formula of concentration, attention and control of the imagination, for the reception of precognitive impressions, concludes: "But what is this but the method of the Semitic diviners

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152. Ezek. 9.





and prophets?--a mind emptied to receive impressions from without, impressions suggested by the phenomena of the present."<sup>153</sup> There are many instances of precognition among the prophets of which the following are examples.

Several of his asses being lost, Saul in seeking them, questioned the prophet Samuel for their whereabouts. It was the common custom of one coming to a seer for a paranormal perception of a lost article. Samuel gave Saul much more than a clairvoyant location of his asses. He described for him three events that would occur after his departure. 1. He would meet two men who would tell him that the asses were found, and that his father was now looking for him. 2. He would next meet three men carrying food who would give him a portion to eat. 3. After that he would meet the sons of the prophets, prophesying with musical instruments, and the spirit of their prophesying would be contagious, so that Saul also would be possessed with the prophetic spirit, which would "turn him into another man."<sup>154</sup> As these events were all in the future, precognitive clairvoyance is the only extrasensory term to describe them.

There is an instance of apparent precognition recorded of the old prophet of Bethel. Having enticed a prophet of

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<sup>153</sup>. Guillaume, Prophecy and Divination, pp. 230-231.

<sup>154</sup>. I Sam. 10:1-6.





Judah to disobey his revelation from Yahweh, the old prophet, who remains anonymous, prophesied that because of the Judean prophet's disobedience, his carcass should not be buried in the sepulchre of his fathers. Following his departure he was attacked by a wild animal and slain, and the old prophet buried his body in his own grave in Bethel.<sup>155</sup> This case was chosen because of the fragmentary character of the prediction, which is commonly the nature of this mode of extrasensory perception. All that was prophesied was that he would not be buried in the sepulchre of his father, as was the custom of the Hebrews. Nothing was said of the means which would prevent his burial with his fathers, namely, the wild animal attack. Its fragmentary nature is similar to the prediction of Mrs. Leonard concerning the imminent and sudden death of Dr. Thomas. In this instance nothing was said about the means which would cause the prediction, namely, the auto accident. Its resemblance to Mark Twain's and to my wife's precognitive dreams is also noted in this fragmentary character. Twain saw only the coffin containing the corpse of his brother. There was no mention of how or when. My wife received only an isolated detail from a larger event. These instances show for precognition that which Duguid observed in telepathy--the fragmentary character of the perception.

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155. I Kings 13:21-32.





Agabus, the prophet of the early Christian Church, journeyed from Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria to announce to the congregation at that city that a famine was coming. The early Christians, acting upon the prophecy of Agabus, began planning a relief program. According to the record the precognition was fulfilled shortly thereafter.<sup>156</sup>

4. Postcognition. There is an experience of the prophet Daniel which has a possible postcognitive interpretation. King Nebuchadnezzar was rather demanding upon his soothsayers. Having had a dream which left him very distressed, he called for his wise men to show him the interpretation. When they asked him to relate the dream, he stated that he had forgotten it, and that they would have to tell him the dream and the interpretation--or forfeit their heads. Having heard of the predicament of the wise men, Daniel, being one of them, requested that the king give him time and he would produce the dream and its interpretation. He perceived the dream and its interpretation that night, and on relating them both to the king the following day, was rewarded with a high administrative position.<sup>157</sup> The dream perceived had already happened. The interpretation was in the conscious mind of no living person. The perception could be classed as an example of postcognition. There is another extrasensory interpretation, namely, telepathy. Though the

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<sup>156</sup>. Acts 11:27-30.

<sup>157</sup>. Dan. 2.





king had forgotten the dream, it was in his subconscious mind whose memories are as readily if not more readily transferred than the thoughts in the conscious mind.

5. The vision. Another kind of prophetic extra-sensory perception is the vision. The vision presents all the characteristics of clairvoyant perception, except an objective event. Seeing and in a lesser degree, hearing, were the principle methods by which the prophet received communication from "the unseen world."<sup>158</sup> The location of the imagery of the prophetic vision is beyond the scope of scientific investigation. Were it not for the fact that the vision imparts truth and knowledge, and has an integrating effect on the prophet's personality, it would be termed an hallucination. Having these positive influences we can say it was not an illusion or an hallucination. Tyrrell has a theory to explain the vision scientifically in terms of extrasensory perception which will be discussed in the next chapter. The vision experiences of prophets are numerous. The following examples are typical.

As a lad in the house of the high priest, Eli, Samuel heard someone call his name. It was night and he left his bed to see what Eli desired. The old priest disclaimed any knowledge of the call. The same thing occurred again, and Eli, perceiving the paranormal nature of the

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<sup>158</sup>. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 116.





experience, instructed Samuel to answer, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." When the boy heard his name the third time he answered, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Then he heard the voice of his God speaking to him of the coming punishment of Eli's family. This experience was tantamount to Samuel's call as a prophet.<sup>159</sup>

Ezekiel begins his description of his vision of the valley of dry bones by saying, "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones." In his vision the prophet is told by Yahweh to prophesy to the bones that they come to life. He obeyed, and the bones began moving together, formed joints, were clothed with flesh, and upon the prophet's further prophecy, became alive, and were an army of human beings.<sup>160</sup> The prophet then perceived the allegorical meaning of the vision for his people, now in captivity, but hoping again to become a nation. What possible explanation could account for this vision, wholly unaware of a known objective event, will be taken up in the next chapter.

Other experiences of Ezekiel are distinctly descriptive of clairvoyance, were it not for the fact that he enters into the experience as an active participant. In one of

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<sup>159</sup>. I Sam. 3.

<sup>160</sup>. Ezek. 37:1-14.





these instances he sees from Babylon the temple gate of Jerusalem, and a group of men standing before the gate, some of whom he recognizes. The prophet perceived Yahweh telling him to prophesy unto these men. Up until this time all could have been due to clairvoyance. The prophet then enters the scene, prophesies to the men, and one of the men falls down dead.<sup>161</sup>

Amos begins his vision by saying, "The Lord showed me . . ."<sup>162</sup> Habakkuk states; "the burden which I did see."<sup>163</sup> Micah initiates his prophecy with, "The word of the Lord that came to Micah . . . which he saw."<sup>164</sup>

g. The prophet's after effects. The after effects which the prophet experienced following his psychical experiences correspond to those of modern psychics. The most pronounced after effect was the feeling of certainty. After having delivered his oracle which he had received in a revelation experience to King Ahab, Micaiah placed his reputation as a prophet on the fulfillment of that oracle. He was a prisoner at the time, and his oracle was a prediction of Ahab's defeat in a battle, which probably meant he was placing his life on the fulfillment of his prophecy. "If

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161. Ezek. 11:1-13.

162. Amos 3:7.

163. Hab. 1:1.

164. Micah 1:1.





thou return at all in peace," he said to his king, "The Lord hath not spoken by me . . . Hearken, O people, every one of you."<sup>165</sup>

An incident from the prophecy of Nathan shows the contrast between the confidence in an opinion derived from reason, and one received through psychical experience. King David asked the prophet's advice on his plan to build a temple. The prophet thought it a good idea and told him that Yahweh would be with him in such a worthy venture. It was the natural answer for a prophet of Yahweh to give to a question of this nature. That night Nathan experienced the revelation that it was not Yahweh's will that David build the temple. There was no hesitation between his opinion from reason and his conviction through revelation, as the prophet delivered his message from Yahweh which changed the king's plans.<sup>166</sup>

In describing the effect of his visionary experiences Ezekiel uses such terms as, "The hand of the Lord was strong upon me,"<sup>167</sup> and "The hand of the Lord God fell upon me."<sup>168</sup> The intensity of the impressions received left the prophet with absolute certainty that he had perceived truth. He could not doubt the reality of an experience so vivid with-

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<sup>165</sup>. I Kings 22:28.

<sup>166</sup>. II Sam. 7:1-17.

<sup>167</sup>. Ezek. 3:14.

<sup>168</sup>. Ibid., 8:1.





out doubting his own sanity. His soundness of mind prevented the latter. With the prophet as well as with the modern psychic, it is not a question of thinking or observing, but of knowing.<sup>169</sup>

Another after effect noticed by at least some of the prophets is that of weakness. The psychical experience is often so intense that it depletes the prophet's mental and physical strength. Daniel describes himself following a vision as having no strength and complains that his "comeliness" is turned into corruption.<sup>170</sup> After another vision he fainted and was sick several days.<sup>171</sup> The mental and physical debilitation caused by the intensity of Daniel's visionary experiences resembles the headaches and fatigue which Cayce experienced following his most exhausting trances. So long as Cayce restricted his trances to two a day, he seemed to thrive on them physically and mentally. If however he exceeded this number, he became nervous and fatigued.<sup>172</sup>

Another similarity of the prophets to Cayce is their occasional remedies for physical healings. When Hezekiah was seriously ill with a boil, Isaiah directed that a lump

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169. Carrel, Man the Unknown, p. 125.

170. Dan. 10:8.

171. Ibid., 8:27.

172. Sugrue, There Is a River, p. 155.





of figs be placed on the sore.<sup>173</sup> A fig poultice is similar to the grape poultice which was a frequent remedy which Cayce proposed in his clairvoyant trance state.

The most beneficial after effect of the prophet's psychical experience was growth, intellectually, emotionally and ethically. These are the qualities which Akhilananda states are the real tests of the objectivity of the prophetic vision. We have already noted the mental genius of Daniel as he was praised by Nebuchadnezzar, and the subsequent responsibility which he filled in Babylon. Also mentioned was Isaiah's reputation as a thinker, and the intellectual capacity of all the prophets, which capacity developed out of the knowledge they received through their experiences of revelation.

Samuel predicted that Saul, coming under the influence of the sons of the prophets, would be turned into another man. Though the description is not clear his implication is that Saul would become a better man. His prophetic experience would have an ethical and emotional after effect upon him. He would have higher ethical standards and be emotionally, more mature. The genuine prophetic experience left the prophet ethically a better man, and emotionally a more mature man. When the experience did not have this effect, or had an opposite effect, we may suspect a subconscious,

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<sup>173</sup>. Isaiah 20:7.





projective or fraudulent causation.

Summing up the evidence for extrasensory perception in the prophetic function are the following:

1. That which distinguished the prophetic office from that of other religious functions was the paranormal experiencing of the revelation of the will of the deity.

2. The prophetic attitude toward his office was the ideal for a laboratory subject in extrasensory perception experimentation. He was passionate in zeal, confident of his authority, assured of his paranormal powers and in rapport with his deity (comparable to the subject-experimenter rapport).

3. His personality had the qualities naturally conducive to the operation of extrasensory perception, that is, it was unaffectedable and trended toward mystical contemplation.

4. The revelation experience which authenticated his office, usually occurred in an atmosphere which encouraged the occurrence of extrasensory perception. It was one without distraction, in the wilderness, in solitude, at night. The prophet had freedom of response in a relationship which included only himself and his deity, and was without the unnatural restraints which lower the efficiency of extrasensory perception.

5. The more descriptive accounts of many prophetic experiences are strikingly suggestive of the extrasensory





perceptions of telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, precognition and postcognition.

6. The after effects of the prophetic experience had the same qualities as those which frequently follow the spontaneous extrasensory experience today. There was the feeling of certainty concerning the reality of what was experienced. There was a growth in the personality stature, intellectually, emotionally and ethically. There was frequently a physical and mental exhaustion.

7. In the light of modern scientific knowledge this evidence would conclusively show that the most reasonable hypothesis to adopt is that the prophet experienced the powers of extrasensory perception in varying degrees in his function as a mediator for the deity to his people. What is the source of this extrasensory perception, as well as of the other psychic experiences that composed the prophetic function, will be discussed in the next chapter.





## CHAPTER VII

### EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION AND THE SUPERCONSCIOUS MIND

It is the purpose of this chapter to investigate the sources both of extrasensory perception and of visionary experiences. The correlations of the previous chapter will be used, together with other known data and related phenomena, to work out a hypothesis which will integrate the conclusions of this study with modern psychology. The task will begin with a study of the subconscious mind. Following this, specialized groups, the scientists, the writers, the philosophers, who receive inspiration for their function, will be investigated. The third section will develop the proposal of the superconscious mind as the channel of extrasensory experiences, as well as the other psychical experiences connected with the prophetic function. The chapter will conclude with a correlation of superconscious realization with mysticism.

#### I. THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

Ever since the beginning of psychical research the subconscious mind has been considered the region of extrasensory perception. The term, subconscious, was not used in the beginning, for it had not yet been popularized by





James and others. The great pioneer of the subconscious, Freud, called it the "unconscious." Myers called it the subliminal mind. He thought of the mind as having a threshold or limen. Above this threshold occurred all the consciously controlled activities of the mind. This was the supraliminal. Below the threshold were those mental influences and activities which functioned without conscious control. This was the subliminal. Early experiments in hypnotism by Janet and Braid gave evidence of this subliminal region of the mind. These experiments showed that the more quiescent the conscious mind becomes, the more pronounced are the manifestations of the subconscious.<sup>1</sup> This dependence upon the inactivity of the brain for its emergence has led to the belief that the subconscious is not dependent on anatomical relations.<sup>2</sup>

Hudson, writing in 1910 called the subconscious, the subjective mind, as differentiated from the objective mind which we now call the conscious mind. He reasoned that the subconscious mind was more independent of the objective world than is the conscious mind, and functioned in its own little world in the mind of the subject. The conscious mind on the other hand is absorbed in adapting to the objective

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1. Hudson, The Law of Psychic Phenomena, p. 47.

2. Ibid., p. 46.





world of space, time, energy and matter. He noticed that the subjective mind had control of the bodily anatomical functions, and that it was easily influenced by suggestion.<sup>3</sup> Hypnosis demonstrates both of these principles, as the subject will experience various physical feelings upon suggestion.

Telepathic transference of a thought in the subconscious mind, repressed or forgotten to the extent that it can not even be recognized by the individual, has been discussed previously. The subconscious mind is also capable of perceiving objects by means of the sensory organs without that perception being experienced by the conscious mind. In this case a telepathic transference could take place without ever having been a part of a conscious mind.<sup>4</sup>

The subconscious mind has been considered the storehouse for all mental activities not controlled by the conscious mind. Through Freudian emphasis these activities are usually associated with physical cravings and memories. The experiences of an extrasensory nature or of mystical ecstasy, when investigated, have usually been included, for want of a better allocation, within the function of the subconscious mind.<sup>5</sup> Lyttleton has pointed out that the great difference

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3. Ibid., p. 151.

4. Carrington, Your Psychic Powers and How to Develop Them, p. 38.

5. Lyttleton, Our Superconscious Mind, p. 175.





in the quality of experiences of physical cravings, repressions, and memories and those of extrasensory and ecstatic experience would imply the functions of different dimensions of the mind. The subconscious mind has been made to contain too many and too diversified mental activities. It requires a division.

Povah states that the great prophets were aware of the necessity of this division, and that they were able to distinguish the difference between inspiration and the "mere outcroppings" of the subconscious mind. He believes that the discovery of this differentiation by the prophet accounts for the difference between the early prophets and the great prophets.<sup>6</sup> Povah should have made this awareness the distinction between the great prophet and the mediocre prophet, between the honorable genius of religious revelation and the inferior visionary, rather than between the early prophets and the great prophets. I offer this criticism because I have found that the time when a prophet functioned had little connection with his greatness. Though I respect the originality, sincerity and ethical idealism which characterized Mohammed's early prophecy, I can not accept the validity of his later prophetic experiences because of the unethical self-centered life to which they gave

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6. Povah, The New Psychology and the Hebrew Prophets, p. 127.





assent. Because of his desire to receive revelations to substantiate his selfish ambitions, it is my conclusion that the majority of these later revelations were either the projections of his subconscious mind or were deliberate deceptions.<sup>7</sup> Though John the Baptist lived five hundred years before Mohammed, he said, "I must decrease,"<sup>8</sup> It is my opinion that the greater prophet was the earlier. In a study of this nature the prophet's experience must be critically evaluated and only that which has no apparent explanation in known psychological principles should be assigned to a dimension of the mind other than the conscious and the subconscious.

## II. THE SUBJECTS OF PARANORMALLY PERCEIVED KNOWLEDGE

The prophets were not the only group who experienced paranormal guidance for their task. The results of Prince's research into the spontaneous cases of extrasensory perception among notable personages show that scientists have more psychical experiences than do clergymen.<sup>9</sup> This observation agrees with the statement of Carrel, himself an outstanding

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7. Muir, The Life of Mohammed, pp. 300-350.

8. John 3:30.

9. W. F. Prince, Noted Witnesses for Psychical Research (Boston: Boston Society for Psychical Research, 1928), p. 10.





biologist, that "men of science do not know where they are going. They are guided by chance, by subtle reasoning, by a sort of clairvoyance."<sup>10</sup>

Writers have frequently described their reception of ideas from unaccountable sources. In a personal letter John Milton ascribed the composition of a poem he had written to "a certain impelling faculty." He had not previously deliberated on the composition, and was unable to account for the creative impulse, which came to him as he lay awake in the early hours of the morning.<sup>11</sup> He referred to another of his masterpieces as composed through "devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge and sends out his seraphim with the hallow'd fire<sup>12</sup> of His altar to touch and purify the lip of whom he pleases." The description is taken from the vision experience of Isaiah in which he received his prophetic call. Upon his complaint that he was undone, and that he was a man of unclean lips, the seraphim took one of the hot coals from off the altar of Yahweh with a pair of tongs and placed it upon the prophet's lips as a symbolic act of his purification.<sup>13</sup>

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10. Carrel, Man the Unknown, p. 23.

11. Lyttleton, op. cit., p. 210.

12. S. P. Cadman, The Prophets of Israel (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1933), p. 79.

13. Isaiah 6.





There is a marked correspondence between Milton's description of poetic inspiration and the prophet's narration of the reception of his oracle. The fact that Milton's inspiration occurred at night while all was dark and quiet compares to the frequent occurrence of the prophetic revelation at night, the darkened atmosphere of the seance, and the laboratory observation that distraction hinders extrasensory perception. In comparing his inspirational experience to the revelation experience of the prophet Isaiah, the poet himself was aware of the nature of his calling and experience.

Robert Louis Stevenson was constantly aware of invasions of creative thought into his consciousness. He ascribed the whole of his published fiction to the activity of "some brownie, some familiar, some unseen collaborator."<sup>14</sup>

The poet, William Blake, is known for his vision experiences, which often form the content of his poems. Poets often have vivid mind pictures, which in Blake's experience, became "exteriorised visual impressions."<sup>15</sup> Walt Whitman believed in a wondrous something in the human body, "an intuition of the absolute balance in time and space of the world, a soul sight of that divine clue that holds

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14. Lyttleton, op. cit., p. 214.

15. Ibid., p. 215.





everything in controlled purpose."<sup>16</sup>

The philosophers despite their emphasis on the rational activity of the mind, are not excluded from receiving knowledge in a paranormal manner. Socrates was conscious of an inexplicable guidance. He experienced from his childhood "something divine and spiritual . . . a sort of voice" that came to him, which always manifested its guidance in a restraining manner.<sup>17</sup>

Philo the Hebrew philosopher of Alexandria, in relating the condition in which he often constructed his philosophy describes what appears to be a type of possession. Becoming very excited he would lose consciousness of where he was, the people that were with him, and of what he was saying or writing. In these experiences he received a "richness of interpretation."<sup>18</sup> This reception of knowledge through a possessing force, is identical to prophetic possession, and resembles the cruder forms of prophetic ecstasy, though without the violent agitation of ecstatic frenzy.

The prophets as persons subject to paranormal guidance have been investigated in the previous chapters. The prophetic vision, commonly the mode of receiving this guidance, has the nature of an impression from an external source.

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16. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.84.

17. Lyttleton, op. cit., p. 207.

18. Ibid., p. 196.





Tyrrell the present president of the British Society for Psychical Research, proposes the theory that the prophetic vision is the result of the stimulation of the sensory organs by impressions made upon the prophet's mind.<sup>19</sup> The intense impression of an idea from extrasensory sources upon the prophet's mind could stimulate the prophet's sensory organs so that he actually saw the idea in imagery or heard it in words. The vision according to this interpretation is not a clairvoyant or clairaudient experience, but a telepathic one, in which the visual and auditory accompaniment is the result of sensory stimulation due to the intensity of the telepathic impression. I like this theory because it utilizes the principles of parapsychology and psychology to explain an experience which all too frequently has been placed into the category of hallucination, but which, because of its integrating and enlightening quality clearly does not belong there.

In his precognitive experiences the prophet paranormally perceived knowledge which transcended not only the sensory apparatus, but also the temporal sequence. The source of this knowledge has no apparent limitations of past, present and future. When his child was seriously ill, king Jeroboam sent his wife to the prophet Ahijah. She was to inquire of him whether the child would recover. Because

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19. Tyrrell, Science and Psychic Phenomena, p. 267.





of the contention between the prophet and the king, she disguised herself to prevent his knowing her identity or that of her child. As she approached him, however, the prophet was aware of both her identity and her mission--though he was blind. He prophesied that as she entered her city on her return, the child would die. The record reports that as she stepped on the threshold of her door, the child died.<sup>20</sup>

Another instance of the prophet's transcendence of the time sequence in his precognitions is that of Elisha's prediction concerning one of Israel's noblemen. Samaria had been besieged by the Syrians, and its populace was starving. Elisha the prophet went to the court of the king and predicted that on the morrow food would be plentiful. One of the lords of the court scoffed at the prophecy. Elisha warned the lord, "Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shall not eat thereof." The Syrian host, fearing an attack by the Hittites abandoned their seige and left their supplies. The abandoned camp was discovered by leper outcasts who reported it to the city. As the people went out to claim the spoils, which included much food, the scoffing nobleman was trampled to death by the hunger-crazed people as he attempted to take charge at the city gate.<sup>21</sup>

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20. I Kings 14.

21. II Kings 7.





## III. THE SUPERCONSCIOUS MIND

The evidence has pointed to the occurrence of human experiences which are both extrasensory and extra temporal in nature. These experiences have many variations. They have a unifying effect on the personality and impart knowledge to the mind. These experiences are not consciously controlled, and their occurrence has the appearance of an invasion of consciousness. They are pronouncedly dissimilar to the activities usually associated with the subconscious mind. While those of the subconscious are diffuse, and disconnected in a free association, those of the superconscious are sharply in focus, as in hypnotism, in complete concentration on one subject at a time, as all else fades from the mental stage. They appear to be as far above consciousness in their nature and in their function, as those activities normally associated with the subconscious mind seem to be below consciousness. They point to the future, while the subconscious activities emerge from the past. They are the activities of a superconscious mind in contrast with those of a subconscious mind.<sup>22</sup> They are the "higher psychic registrations" of which certain human minds are capable.

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22. Heard, The Ascent of Humanity, p. 304.





The superconscious mind is that dimension where time loses its significance and the concepts of divine destiny and human freedom harmoniously merge.<sup>23</sup> When Isaiah received his visionary call, seeing the seraphim, the altar, and the coals, he was experiencing an activity of his superconscious mind. The psychical impact that reached him through his superconscious mind was of such intensity that, following Tyrrell's theory, it stimulated his nervous system, particularly his sensory nerves to visualize the impression. Whatever the source of the impression that resulted in the vision that shaped his life, Isaiah received its impact through his superconscious mind. His ability to perceive the vision in all its vividness and to understand its symbolism and meaning was a result of the rapport that existed between his superconscious mind and his conscious mind.<sup>24</sup> That which makes the prophet's reception of inspiration possible is the development and conditioning of the superconscious and conscious minds, and of the relationship that exists between them.<sup>25</sup>

Tennyson, when alone, often had superconscious realizations of ecstasy. The realization would occur following his

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23. Garrett, Telepathy, in Search of a Lost Faculty, p. 137.

24. Lyttleton, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 181.





preoccupation with his own individuality. His individuality began slowly to slip away, to fade out, to dissolve into a boundless or cosmic consciousness.<sup>26</sup> The realization was clear and certain and had an exhilarating effect on the poet. At that moment death or cessation of individuality was incomprehensible and the loss of personality was true life. Through his superconscious mind he was experiencing a deeper consciousness which he described as "not the epiphenomenon, but the root and reality of all."<sup>27</sup> His superconscious mind was the entrance way into whatever spiritual region may lie beyond the human personality. Superconscious experience made possible his reception of spiritual truth.

Kaplan, who professes to explain inspiration and revelation in terms of scientific knowledge, describes these experiences as "uprushes of the soul's contents into consciousness."<sup>28</sup> Though Kaplan probably has in mind the thought of a superconsciousness, to describe it as a soul differentiated from consciousness, whose contents, through "intense mental excitement" are forced into consciousness, has little relationship to the principles of scientific

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26. James, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

27. Myers, "Tennyson as Prophet," Science and a Future Life, p. 158.

28. Kaplan, Psychology of Prophecy, pp. 112-113.





terminology. If psychology allows the interpretation of a subconscious mind to explain those mental activities which seem to occur at a level below the critical judgment of the conscious mind, by that same principle it must allow the possibility of a superconscious mind to explain those mental activities which occur at a level above the possibility of a judgment by the conscious mind, should those activities be shown to exist. It has been the purpose of this study to show that these activities do exist.

T. H. Robinson states that the point at which "the self-revealing divine impinges on the human soul is far below the level of normal consciousness."<sup>29</sup> What Robinson desires to express could better be stated, "far above the level of normal consciousness." Following Johnson's illustration<sup>30</sup> we can think of the superconscious relation to the conscious and subconscious in terms of an isosceles triangle, the construction of which symbolizes the relationship of capacity, position and concentration of focus of the three dimensions of the mind. The subconscious, as shown by the base section of the triangle is a vast mental dimension of memories which have slipped below the level of consciousness in the process of forgetting, or have been repressed from the

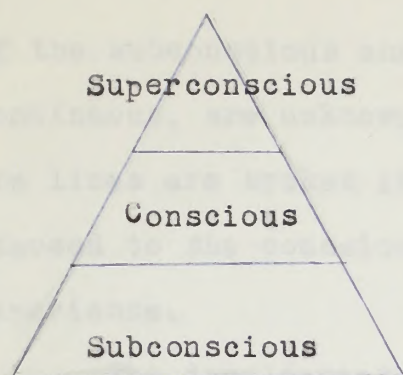
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29. Rowley, "The Nature of Prophecy In the Light Of Recent Study, "Harvard Theological Review, p. 31.

30. Conversation with Paul E. Johnson, Boston University, July, 1947.







activities of consciousness.

These diffuse and disconnected memory images share this section with the natural urges of the physical body which often influence conscious activity via

the subconscious. The free if not chaotic association of the contents of this base section of the triangle is responsible for the disconnected character of any realization of the subconscious by the conscious, as in the dream or the day-dream. While both the top and base sections of the triangle are beyond the level of the conscious mind, they are opposites in every other respect. Each is more distinctly related to the conscious mind, or middle section of the triangle than to each other. The conscious mind is more limited in scope than the subconscious, and has a sharper focus of attention--as shown by its shape and position in the triangle. The activity of the superconscious, as shown by the size and shape of its section, is even more limited in scope and sharper in concentration than the conscious mind. The apex of the triangle is a good analogy of the pointed focus which exists in superconscious realization. The mind is fixed upon one subject, such as God, and all else is lost in a blurred background in the concentration of the moment. As long as the division lines remain intact, the activities





of the subconscious and superconscious, though they may be continuous, are unknown to the conscious mind. If however the lines are broken in either division, the contents are exposed to the conscious mind, and become a part of conscious experience.

The development of the superconscious mind depends on a disciplined conscious mind. The superconscious, to be experienced, must occupy the attention of the individual. The superconscious can be consciously directed only in part, and in order to experience its activities the individual must relax the attention of his conscious mind. He must also suppress the images associated with things of the past that seek to emerge from his subconscious mind. When the conscious mind is in a state of relaxed concentration, and the subconscious mind is suppressed, the stage is set for the entrance of superconscious activity. Some people seem to have naturally these abilities which are necessary for the activity of the superconscious, and often involuntarily assume the required conditions. Others have to develop them. The superconscious experience whether it occurs voluntarily or involuntarily, can only happen to a mind which is integrated and controlled, because a state of relaxed concentration is not possible in an undisciplined and disintegrated mind.<sup>31</sup> This qualification is true even in superconscious

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31. Akhilananda, op. cit., p. 154.





realization through dreams. Though dreams are a universal experience, those whose dreams may include the superconscious influence--as in Dunne's experiments--are those who have the degree of integration required for thought control, those who are relatively free from obsessive and compulsive thoughts and mental images.

Akhilananda states that the great majority of those who have experienced the superconscious have voluntarily developed this capacity.<sup>32</sup> While those having higher superconscious experiences precede those experiences by a state of relaxed concentration and suppression of the subconscious mind, there is little evidence in the lives of the majority of the great prophets of any voluntary control of the conscious mind or suppression of the subconscious mind for the purpose of receiving revelation. They often met the conditions required for superconscious experience without fully realizing the cause and effect procedure they were following, their constitutional and environmental encouragements being encouraging factors. An investigation of their experiences shows that many of them had all the aspects of a sudden and unexpected invasion of their consciousness. Akhilananda's statement is no doubt based upon Indian cultivation of the superconscious, which is a deliberate controlled mental preparation.

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32. Ibid., p. 175.





An individual having superconscious experiences has an integrated personality.<sup>33</sup> An outstanding quality of the prophets' personality was its integration. Disintegration is due to serious conflicts which either cause or result from an exaggerated self-consciousness, if not self-centeredness. A relaxed concentration is a condition not possible under the vigilance of a mind that is involuntarily conscious of itself or its problems. A unified personality can, voluntarily or involuntarily, depending upon the individual, reduce the mind to a state of passivity. Though the mind is in a state of passivity, it is actively engaged, voluntarily or involuntarily, in retaining its passivity and in restraining the emergence of the subconscious.

Lyttleton offers the possibility that superconscious minds differ in quality even as conscious minds.<sup>34</sup> Separating these dimensions of the mind to this extent of comparison may give the impression that they are separate entities rather than different emphases and foci of attention. The difference may not be in the quality of the superconscious mind, but in the mind's ability to receive superconscious activity into consciousness. Those whose inspirations have benefited mankind have had this highly developed superconscious sensitivity or pronounced ability to receive

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33. Ibid., p. 87.

34. Lyttleton, op. cit., p. 193.





superconscious knowledge into consciousness.<sup>35</sup>

This differentiation in quality or ability may partially account for the apparent discrimination in extra-sensory scoring. That one student can score consistently high at the Duke laboratory and another score consistently chance, may have its explanation in an "IQ" of the mind's ability to experience superconscious activity.

Given a high quality of superconscious sensitivity, an individual must also possess an efficient conscious mind with which to register those superconscious impressions which have a value for mankind.<sup>36</sup> Both the conscious and superconscious minds must be mutually developed, in order to produce psychical experiences like those realized by the great prophets.

Superconscious experiences besides changing the intellectual life of the individual by adding to his store of knowledge, may better the quality of his emotional life.<sup>37</sup> This intellectual and emotional improvement is due to the nature of the superconscious realization which causes the individual to transcend his own individual consciousness and to apprehend the spiritual truths of life. It makes him aware of a greater consciousness, giving him assurance where others

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35. Ibid., p. 224.

36. Ibid., p. 231.

37. Akhilananda, op. cit., p. 158.





doubt and fear. It inspires him with the truth of his spiritual nature, that love and not hate is the way of security. An examination of the superconscious experiences of the prophets and mystics shows that the experience is one of assurance that the events in life are under the control of divine providence. Having experienced that providence as one in harmony with human life, the prophet feels secure in that providence. He perceived that since love was the divine pattern for living, it should be the human pattern also, and as it is the nature of the governing power of the world, people may have security in making their way of life of that same nature.

He only realizes the superconscious when he sets aside his own individuality. Whenever he becomes aware of his conscious person, his superconscious realization ceases, for the superconscious realization is of universal, cosmic conscious nature.<sup>38</sup> Tennyson wrote of this influx of the superconscious:

Knowledge comes but wisdom lingers, and I hunger on the  
shore  
And the individual withers, and the world is more and  
more.<sup>39</sup>

The great prophets of the religions of the world were evidently persons of superconscious realization who received their

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38. Heard, op. cit., p. 314.

39. Rolfe, Select Poems of Alfred Lord Tennyson, p.105.





timeless and universal truths by transcending their own individuality to a common source which knows no limitations of space and time.

#### IV. THE SUPERCONSCIOUS MIND IN MYSTICISM

Because of the nature of superconscious realization it frequently results in ecstasy. Its often intense impressions seem to unite the individual with a limitless consciousness, and produce in him overwhelming feelings of joy. Mysticism may develop into superconscious ecstasy.

James has listed four qualities of mysticism, all of which connect mysticism with superconscious experience. They are ineffability, noetic quality, transciency and passivity.<sup>40</sup>

a. Ineffability. The mystic has his greatest trouble in conveying what he experiences to others. His impressions are from an extrasensory, extra-temporal source and he must describe them in terms of a sense-time world. All that we have is a sense-time translation of the original experience.<sup>41</sup> Tennyson said of his mystical experience of the superconscious, "I am ashamed of my feeble description. Have I not said the state is utterly beyond words."<sup>42</sup> Superconscious experience

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40. James, op. cit., pp. 37-72.

41. Tyrrell, op. cit., p. 277.

42. James, op. cit., p. 375.





lacks a vocabulary with which to describe it; it is only approximated in the terminology of conscious experience.

b. Noetic quality. James states that mysticism offers insights into truths not perceived by the intellect. It is a means of knowing, hence of noetic quality. Mystic revelations often convey important knowledge, and leave the mystic convinced of their authority.<sup>43</sup> The wealth of truth received through the superconscious experiences of the prophets is a confirmation of James' statements.

c. Transiency. The mystical experience is of relatively short duration. As a strongly impressioned dream arising from the subconscious may awaken the individual, so perhaps the intensity of a superconscious impression may be so great that it will excite the mind and so break its concentrated attention. The passive condition of the conscious mind, except in sleep, is not a normal one, and because of this fact could not be expected to continue over an extended period of time.

d. Passivity. The mystical contemplation of symbols and ideas arrests the activity of the conscious mind.<sup>44</sup> Its state of relaxed concentration opens the way for the occurrence of superconscious experience.

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43. Ibid., p. 37.

44. Leuba, The Psychology of Religious Mysticism, p. 169.





Mysticism is found among all cultures. Its basic pattern can be adapted to the most diverse of philosophies and theologies that reserve a place for its emotional mood.<sup>45</sup> Otto said that mysticism is the same in all places, cultures and ages. East and west, north and south lose their differences in mystical experience.<sup>46</sup> The various thought systems of the conscious mind are flexible enough to allow descriptions of the superconscious experience.

The interpretations of the experience differ according to the particular system of belief to which the mystic adheres. The particular description of what he sees, hears or feels depends on the religious beliefs of his culture. The Christian mystic perceives imagery of a Christian interpretation; the Mohammedan mystic, imagery of Moslem teachings; the yogi, impressions colored by his Hindu culture. The mystical pattern however remains identical despite the differences in description and interpretation which the mystic offers for what he saw, heard or felt. His conscious mind being passive, the impressions of his superconscious mind enter his consciousness and activate his experience in terms of his particular beliefs. Applying Tyrrell's theory we could say that the superconscious impression stimulated the sense organs to visualize their effect in imagery familiar

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45. James, op. cit., p. 417.

46. Akhilananda, op. cit., p. 168.





to the mind of the individual. "In Hinduism, in Neoplatonism, in Sufism, in Christian mysticism, in Whitmanism, we find the same recurring note, so that there is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity."<sup>47</sup> The recurring note is not particularly the content, but the fashion in which the content was perceived.

The prophet and the mystic have similarities in their experience. The Mohammedan belief that intercourse with the world of angels can only be accomplished by the suppression of the physical senses,<sup>48</sup> is a description of the receptive mystical attitude. The mystical formula was the *modus operandi* of the prophet's reach into the superconscious. Gotama, founder of the Buddhistic reform movement in Hinduism, spent six years in study and meditation after retiring from the world at twenty-nine years of age. He attained Buddha-hood or enlightenment in a supreme moment of his life when, while sitting under the Bo tree, he received his high degree of insight. The solitude and meditation with the background of nature that led to Gotama's experience of enlightenment are again the mystical means for experiencing the super-conscious.<sup>49</sup>

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47. James, op. cit., p. 410.

48. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 312.

49. T. W. Rhys Davids, Buddhism, It's History and Literature (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons 1926, new edition), pp. 104-120.





The reception of truths through the mystical superconscious states means that knowledge is received through the activity of the superconscious mind as well as through the rational activities of the conscious mind.<sup>50</sup> Mysticism is the cultivation of the superconscious activities. The difference between prophecy and mysticism chiefly is this, that while the mystic seeks to unite with the divine spirit, the prophet felt that the divine spirit had sought him, and had entered him to use him as his spokesman to the people.

Like the prophets, the mystics are very practical people. James said of St. Ignatius that his mysticism was the cause of his being "one of the most powerfully practical human engines that ever lived."<sup>51</sup> Superconscious knowledge is practical because it contains the truths of the human spirit.

Like the prophets, the mystics are also optimists.<sup>52</sup> Their superconscious experience was an ecstasy which gave them a joyful outlook on life. The content of their superconscious experience was a manifestation of a larger consciousness, which gave them the conviction of absolute security. Their experiences led them to believe they were guided by an inerrant, powerful, cosmic consciousness.

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50. Guillaume, op. cit., p. 360. James, op. cit., p. 418.

51. James, op. cit., p. 404.

52. Ibid., p. 413.





The prophetic function has been correlated with the activities of the superconscious mind. It may be that the prophets had developed a capacity which is available to far more people than the comparatively few who experience the values of superconscious realization. It will be the purpose of the next and concluding chapter of this study to investigate the validity of this possibility. The practical value of a study of this nature is the applications appropriated from the experiences of the prophets.





## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

#### I. SUMMARY

The great figure in the religious history of the peoples of antiquity is the prophet. A study of his person and function reveals him as a religious and mental genius. The principles of psychology furnish us with the tools to understand the prophetic function by understanding the personality of the prophet.

1. Psychology as such can not clarify the entire prophetic function because there is a pronounced element of the paranormal in that function. Up until the advent of the science of parapsychology we either had to leave this element in the realm of mystery, or explain it away by rational interpretations and psychological principles which did violence to the primary sources of data. That these stories of paranormal mental powers are abundant in the past, and that these same powers are claimed for many today, motivated scientists to test in the laboratory the possibility of such powers. The data from these tests form the new science of parapsychology whose principles can be applied to the paranormal element of the prophetic function.

2. As one particularly qualified to speak for the





deity or deities, the prophet had his representatives among all ancient religious cultures. He was not always called a prophet, and may even have been associated in a priestly manner with the worship cultus, but he was always a mediator for the deity, which is the fundamental definition of the prophetic function. Though they differ radically, magic, divination and prophecy are steps in that order in the evolutionary development of religious mediation. As an advanced step was reached in a particular culture, the preceding one became outmoded, and finally disrespected and outlawed. Reason and reflection are attributes of prophecy in its highest development.

3. A major qualification of the prophet was his possession of paranormal abilities in his mediation. Among these abilities was the experiencing of revelation through dreams, visual and auditory impressions, and ecstatic experiences, ranging from frenzied possession to cultivated mysticism. The great prophets besides having mental abilities of a paranormal nature, were men of keen intellects. They were students of history, and authorities in social and ethical living. Being astute observers of human nature they were practicing psychologists. Their experiences of the will of the deity, though frequently paranormal in nature, were not typically pathological. Their visionary experiences differed from hallucinations in that they integrated their





personalities and improved their minds, while the latter disintegrates the personality and impairs coherent mentality. The prophet was intensely conscious of the presence of God.

4. The prophet served a vital need, or his office and name would never have survived. He gave his civilization communication with the spiritual world. As a qualified mediator he exercised his normal and paranormal powers to perceive the will of the deity, and then proclaimed that will in preaching and teaching, in predicting the future and in working wonders. His predictions of the future were both deductions from recognized moral principles, and paranormally perceived impressions from an external source. The acme of prophecy was the Hebrew prophet. He was unique, not always in method, but in message. Identifying himself with Yahweh's cause, though it meant social ostracism, he tested each experience with what he knew was Yahweh's nature and will.

5. From the prophets of old to the psychics of the present day there have been claims for extrasensory perception. The prophets manifested it in mediation experiences, the poets have claimed it as their inspiration, others, in their intimate human relationships. Prejudice and fear resisted an investigation of this phenomenon until recent years. Extrasensory perception was a nonrational, nonphysical perception, and hence disruptive to a closed thought system which allowed no inexplicables, or which consigned all such





to the exclusive operation and observation of the deity. When resistance was overcome and the possibility of extra-sensory perception was taken to the laboratory, science was ready to investigate the phenomena of the ancient prophet. As telepathy, clairvoyance, postcognition and precognition became relatively established as scientific observations, the prophetic function was being analyzed. What was once regarded as a supernatural mystery is now believed to be a natural though nonphysical ability of the human mind--an ability which may manifest itself involuntarily or spontaneously, or which could possibly be voluntarily cultivated and controlled.

6. The occurrences called psychical phenomena, premonitions, telepathic transferences, predictive dreams, clairvoyant impressions, which are claimed by many in every age are the occurrences which the laboratory has tested and positively shown to exist. The personalities, environmental conditions and mental preparation conducive to positive results in the laboratory are those which facilitate spontaneous psychical occurrences. They are also the conditions and qualifications which made possible the paranormal activity of the prophetic function. The introspective accounts of the subject, the experience itself and the after effect of the subject, in the laboratory, among the spontaneous and professional psychics in our society, and with the prophets,





show marked similarities. Applying these principles of parapsychology and observations of the spontaneous psychic phenomena to the principles of the prophetic function, we find a similarity so convincing that the reasonable conclusion is that the paranormal element of the prophetic function was often a variation of what we now call extrasensory perception.

7. The phenomena of extrasensory perception as well as the more complicated visionary experiences of the prophets, and inspiration invasions of the poets, scientists, artists and philosophers, are not primarily the phenomena of the subconscious mind. They are opposite in character from the activities of the subconscious, being sharply focused, dissociated with the past and of a nonphysical, supra-individual nature. They are above consciousness while the activities of the subconscious are below consciousness. They are of superconscious nature. It is only reasonable from the standpoint of modern psychology to assume a superconscious dimension of the mind to account for these phenomena of a superconscious nature, even as we assume a subconscious dimension to account for those of a subconscious nature. The prophet as well as the mystic was a devotee of the superconscious state of mind. They both reached their experience of God through practices, voluntary or involuntary, which cultivated superconscious realization.





## II. THE PROPHET'S PURPOSE

The prophet's purpose was to make known his experiences of the divine. His was the unique privilege, he felt, of having been the recipient of the secrets of God. These secrets had been revealed to him for the express purpose that he mediate for God to the people. He had been called, commissioned by the deity to speak for him. Having had the revelation of the wisdom and will of God, he was to make known that wisdom and will in as clear and convincing manner as possible. It was his great responsibility, having been given the privilege of revelation, to make absolutely sure that those people under his mediation were clearly aware of the knowledge and will of God.

It was also the prophet's purpose to demand obedience to the divine. He rose above his own individual consciousness to identify himself with a cosmic consciousness. He became oblivious of his own personality as he made of his life a mouthpiece for the deity. As a champion for the honor of his God, the prophet pleaded, exhorted and when necessary, demanded obedience to the will of God, which he as mediator had made known unto the people. With the judgmental fervor which he associated with his God, the prophet could denounce disobedience and threaten punishment. With the compassion which he had described as the nature of his God, he could plead for repentance and promise the divine





blessings which obedience would bring.

He demanded obedience to the divine will with passionate sincerity. He knew no compromise. He never flinched at hardship. Following the straight course of mediator, he fulfilled his task without concern for his own person or regard for the consequences. Wherever he saw the will of his God being disobeyed, there he raised his protest--immediately, clearly and unequivocally.

### III. THE PROPHET'S PSYCHICAL ABILITY

The prophets had psychical experiences. These experiences qualified him for through them he received revelation of the presence, wisdom, knowledge and will of God. These were his experiences of the superconscious. The impressions from this source constituted his inspiration. The extrasensory, extra-temporal nature of these experiences were evidence to him that he was equipped with paranormal powers. The paranormal nature of his cognitions assured him that he had contacted the divine. The superconscious quality of these experiences left the prophet with the feeling of certainty that he had perceived a revelation from God.

The prophet's psychical abilities were a sanction to his office. These abilities were his culture's credentials for one in contact with the supernatural. His possession of perception, extrasensory and extra-temporary, was the proof





that he was in league with divine powers. When his authority was challenged, he pointed to his possession of paranormal powers as his qualifications of a genuine prophet. When he predicted a coming event, the occurrence of that event was the evidence of his authority. His psychical powers formed a major portion of the prophet's authority for his office, both in his own estimation and in that of his society.

#### IV. THE PROPHET'S UNDERSTANDING OF SPIRITUAL LAW

The prophet was a student of history. He knew the past, not necessarily in terms of dates and names, but in terms of right and wrong. He observed that when the nations of the world followed what was right, peace, happiness and good will prevailed. When they lived contrary to these principles, there was strife, bloodshed, wars and slavery.

He was an alert observer of human behavior. He knew by experience that when an individual or a group lived in harmony with the way of life he identified with God's will, they would be rewarded in cultural progress, friendly relationships, and strength of character.

His observations from history and human relations were reasonable arguments that there was an ethical law, a moral order in the world. When he saw his people breaking





this law, he knew that they would have to pay the penalty. It was a cause and effect relationship he had never seen to fail. When Micah knew that the people of Israel were living contrary to the moral law, the will of Yahweh, Leslie has him say, "Yahweh, moral being that he is could do only one thing to his people,"<sup>1</sup> or as Hamilton sums up Jeremiah's warnings, "God must punish because God is just."<sup>2</sup> The prophet promised blessing or punishment to the individual, the community, the city, the nation, the world, on the rational authority of the cause and effect of the principles of the moral law. These reasoned inferences from the prophet's acute observation of the laws of the human spirit were functions of his normal psychological powers. These, together with his paranormal psychological abilities constitute the prophet's authority for his office, furnishing him with mystical and immediate experiences of the presence and will of God.

Because he understood these laws of the human spirit, and because he had a keen intellect with which to interpret them, the prophet was an analyst of the signs of the times. Though he prophesied in the prosperous and peaceful reign of Jeroboam II Amos foresaw troubled days ahead because the

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1. Leslie, The Prophets Tell Their Own Story, p. 101.

2. Hamilton, The Prophets of Israel, p. 111.





nation had grown morally weak in its prosperity, had become insensitive to the oppression of the poor, the value of the human soul, and abuses of justice.<sup>3</sup> The people of Jeremiah's day were guilty of many violations of the spiritual law. Yet their leaders tried to gloss over the seriousness of the situation by saying all was well. "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace."<sup>4</sup> But the prophet was a careful observer of causal relations. His people would suffer ill effects for their violations. The "fruit" of their activity would be their punishment. "Hear O earth: behold I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it."<sup>5</sup> Amos expresses the same causal relationship in the positive. "Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live."<sup>6</sup>

The prophet's understanding of cause and effect in human relations made him aware of the spiritual meaning of economic and political events. Any economy in which the rich became richer at the expense of the poor was doomed to destruction by the judgment of Yahweh.<sup>7</sup> When political

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3. Amos 2.

4. Jere. 6:14.

5. Ibid., 6:19.

6. Amos 5:14.

7. Isaiah 3. Amos 4.





alliances were made with other nations solely for the cause of protection regardless of the integrity of those nations, the prophet was aware that all such alliances would in the end come to naught.

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are strong . . . Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit.<sup>8</sup>

His belief in the dignity of the human spirit led the prophet to protest vehemently against any abuse of basic human values, either by individuals or by society. The prophet Joel charges, "They have cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink." Speaking for Yahweh he promises these offenders, "Swiftly and speedily will I return your recompence on your own head."<sup>9</sup> That "they sold the righteous for silver and the poor for a pair of shoes," was evidence for Amos of the perversion of his people's scale of values, and warrant for his warning, "I will not turn away the punishment thereof."<sup>10</sup>

The prophet responded emotionally to human needs. Violations of the moral law caused human suffering, and when the afflicted suffered because of the iniquities of others,

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8. Isaiah 31:1,3.

9. Joel 3:3.

10. Amos 2:6.





the prophet passionately raised his voice in their behalf.

Micah protests against violence and injustice.

Woe to them that devise iniquity . . . They covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away; so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.<sup>11</sup>

Isaiah defends the poor by warning their oppressors,

The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor, saith the Lord God of hosts.<sup>12</sup>

Though he protested the violation of spiritual law with intense emotion, the prophet's use of reason was exceedingly active in his protest. He tried to meet all arguments to his protests, have his messages well documented with specific violations, and show the folly of a way of living in contradiction to the will of the deity. In the prophecy of Malachi are several question and answer dialogues, all in the words of the prophet as though he were anticipating the defense of those he was rebuking, and were meeting it with counter argument. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings."<sup>13</sup> In the prophecy of Isaiah there is an elaborately developed argument to show the grandeur of

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11. Micah 2:1-2.

12. Isaiah 3:14-15.

13. Mal. 3:8-9.





Yahweh as contrasted with the obvious impotence of an idol which was the product of craftsmen, appealing to logic to convince his people to turn from idols and follow Yahweh.

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? . . . To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? . . . He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved.<sup>14</sup>

Holscher believes that the prophetic experience was often precipitated by an actual perception. The prophet would witness some particular object or activity, and the impression of this perception would initiate a revelation experience of the will of the deity.<sup>15</sup> The basket of summer fruit which Amos saw that led to a prophetic oracle could have been an actual perception.<sup>16</sup> Jeremiah witnessed two baskets of figs being set before the temple, the one with good figs, the other with rotten figs. From this possible actual perception the prophet experienced the word of Yahweh based on an analogy with what had been perceived.<sup>17</sup>

Because he was the mediator between God and his people, much of the prophetic function was an interpersonal

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14. Isaiah 40:12-20.

15. Hölischer, Die Propheten, p. 45.

16. Amos 8:1-3.

17. Jere. 24.





relationship. The prophet addressed individuals, groups, his nation and the world in his capacity. His use of interpersonal relationships was frequently with the national or religious leaders as counselor and as judge.<sup>18</sup> By the dynamic character of his activity, whether by voice or symbolic act, he greatly influenced the masses.

As a social experimenter he used action research in seeking for ways to reform his society and inspire its spiritual growth by obedience to spiritual law. This emphasis on action is shown by the prophet's demand that his opponents do something to show whether they are correct. "Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together."<sup>19</sup> The great prophets did not hesitate to state their position on affairs of church, state and personal conduct, or to make bold predictions, or to make use of drastic symbolic acts and signs--all in their zeal to proclaim the spiritual law.

## V. THE PROPHET'S CONTRIBUTION

The prophets have left their posterity a heritage of religious and ethical truths. The "plummet line of righteousness" with which they tested the value of every doctrine and

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18. Jere. 28. I Kings 21. Isaiah 37.

19. Isaiah 41:23.





practice is a principle basic to a moral world. With this plummet line of righteousness the prophets formulated the science of the ideal human character. The fundamental principle of this science, developed from the sovereignty of righteousness, focuses human character around interests other than those of a self-centered nature. The principles of this science direct the individual to humble his ego before a greater consciousness, and center his efforts on the welfare of his fellowmen. The prophets believed in a purposive design in the world. The principles they advocated were those they interpreted as the major characteristics of this design.

The principle of "mercy and not sacrifice" was foundational to the prophet's conception of true religion. It entailed the irreversibility of the means and the ends--of instrumental values and intrinsic values. So long as the sacrifice or any other function of religious worship was used as a means to strengthen the relationship between an individual and his God, it was serving its purpose as an instrumental value, but when the intimate relationship was neglected and the sacrifice itself became synonymous with religion and the religious life, it had usurped the position of an intrinsic value, which was counter to the design of a moral world. Symbolic acts could never substitute for ethical living.

The principle of mercy and not sacrifice was the





principle that religious cultus could only assist, never substitute for, religious living. The essence of religious living was service to God and man, motivated by love for God and man. The prophets proclaimed the supremacy of love. A God of love and righteousness had created the universe and only individual's of his creation who lived in the spirit of love and righteousness were living in line with the creative, moral design.

## VI. CULTIVATING THE PROPHETIC SPIRIT

The value of a study of the psychology of religious prophecy is instrumental to human values, and must also follow the principle of mercy and not sacrifice. That, in the prophetic experience which made the prophet a religious giant should have its applications for those of the present day who desire the conviction and certainty that the prophets had concerning a greater consciousness, a cosmic purpose, and eternal personal security.

The essence of the prophetic experience was experiencing the divine. The prophet's psychical powers were meaningless to him, his society and his posterity, unless they were used for this purpose. Akhilananda states that the objects of meditation that produce psychical experiences determine the nature of those experiences. He believes that powers of an extrasensory and psychokinetic nature can be





developed by concentrating on material objects. This direction of these mental activities eventuates in inferior qualities of personality, and the practice itself has no ultimate integrating effect on that personality. Concentrating upon an aspect of the divine brings realization which yields the remarkable results evidenced in the lives of the prophets.<sup>20</sup> The Indian Swami describes these superconscious realizations as those which are the experiences of the presence of God or of certain conscious aspects of God, and those which are the experience of the "Absolute in its integral unity." The former of these experiences is dual in nature, while the latter transcends the personality of the mystic and is a complete uniting with the cosmic consciousness.<sup>21</sup>

Brother Lawrence, the French Christian mystic of medieval times said, "I can not imagine how a religious person can live satisfied without the practice of the presence of God."<sup>22</sup> The prophets in their experience were "practicing the presence of God." Their prophetic experience did not exclude a practical life. They followed the vigorous schedule of an active every day life. Their superconscious realizations were applicable to practical living, and would have

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20. Akhilananda, Hindu Psychology, p. 111.

21. Ibid., pp. 163-164.

22. Brother Lawrence, The Practice of the Presence of God (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1895). p. 32.





both lost their meaning and suffered violation of their purpose, if they had not been applied to every day life. To the prophet, experiencing the divine presence was a way of practical devotion to religious growth and service.

From these observations we can deduce principles of application in developing the prophetic spirit. To cultivate superconscious realization and to apply the content of the realization to the happenings of practical living is the essential principle in developing the prophetic spirit.

Cultivating superconscious realization is not limited to certain people with capacities for psychical powers. The humblest mind, says Lyttleton, can attain superconscious knowledge in the same manner as the prophets.<sup>23</sup> I believe this assertion is an over-statement, as constitutional capacities are evidently a factor in superconscious experiences of the intensity realized by the prophets. Superconscious realization is not necessarily the revelation experience. The realization of the presence of the divine as an impression on the consciousness is evidence of the activity of the superconscious. The experience of the superconscious occurs when the "activity" of the conscious mind is one of passivity, and the images and associations of the past in the subconscious are not emerging into consciousness. These

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23. Lyttleton, Our Superconscious Mind, p. 193.





distinctions in mental dimensions should not be confused with exclusive divisions of the mind, but should serve only to identify the activities of the mind. To experience the superconscious we need to assume these conditions which favor its occurrence. As Murphy has observed that the emergence of psi activities occur when the involuntary motivating forces become increasingly preoccupied with things dissociated from the immediately surrounding world,<sup>24</sup> so we experience the superconscious when we relax our minds in concentration upon images or thoughts associated with the superconscious world.

There are different methods of concentrating upon the superconscious sphere. Meditation upon some quality in the nature of God, or imagery suggestive of the deity, or upon principles of divine wisdom, or directions associated with the divine will, prepare the mind for experiences of the divine presence. Mental concentration on principles of spiritual knowledge or regulated periods of devotional practices can have the same preparatory influence on the mind. The application of these various methods for conditioning the mind for superconscious realization depends on the nature of each individual. Some are more adapted to the mental posture of meditation, others to mental activities in concentrated

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<sup>24</sup>. Murphy, "Removal of Impediments to the Paranormal," p. 22.





study, and still others to devotional practices such as prayers and prepared services of worship.<sup>25</sup> In all cases there is concentration of thought upon suprasensory values, and the result will be a superconscious realization or experience of those values.

In all such preparatory suprasensory concentration the individual consciousness must orient itself to a higher or supreme consciousness. We can not retain consciousness of our individuality, our own personality, as a focal point of interest, and have superconscious realization. That which occupies the position of the sun in the solar system of thought in an individual, determines his possibilities of superconscious experience. If the individual himself is the consciousness about which all other consciousnesses revolve, he precludes the possibility of ever experiencing his superconscious mind. The field of consciousness to which the superconscious refers is so incompatible with a self-centered individuality that it can never "come and present itself to that insulated point of consciousness," as long as this armor of self-consciousness obstructs its entrance.<sup>26</sup> The superconscious realization of the prophets was occasioned by their forgetting their own importance, and becoming absorbed in the importance of the divine. To cultivate super-

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25. Akhilananda, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

26. Heard, The Ascent of Humanity, p. 314.





conscious realization we must place divine consciousness at the center of our personal universe of interests. The cosmic consciousness must be the sun in the solar system of our thoughts and values. In the words of Him who was the greatest of the prophets; "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall find it."<sup>27</sup> To be self-centered is to die; to be God-centered is to live.

## VII. CONCLUSION

1. The prophet is a mental and religious genius. The principles of psychology aid our understanding of him.
2. There is in the prophetic function a paranormal element. The principles of the new science, parapsychology, aid our understanding of this aspect of prophecy.
3. The description of prophecy varies with culture and time. In all phases of his development however, the prophet is distinguished as a mediator for the deity to the people.
4. The prophet had both normal and paranormal psychological powers to an extent sufficient to qualify him both to function and be respected as a prophet of the deity.
5. The prophetic office was one of preaching, teaching, predicting the will of the deity, and working wonders in the name of the deity.
6. More primitive cultures believed that the divine

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<sup>27</sup>. Mark 8:35.





spirit possessed the spirit of the prophet to the extent that the personality of the prophet was overruled and overpowered. Others further advanced thought the divine spirit communicated his will to the mind of the prophet.

7. Regardless of the interpretation of the prophet's revelation and inspiration the element of ecstasy, frenzied or mystical, was usually a factor in the prophet's experience of the presence of the deity and his knowledge of the will of the deity.

8. The prophet functioned through normal psychological powers as reasoned inferences from an acute understanding of spiritual law, human nature, history, social and causal relationships. He was emotionally sensitive to human need and a passionate champion of human justice.

9. The possibility of extrasensory perception has been tested by laboratory scientists with the data being predominantly positive.

10. The similarity between the laboratory experiences with extrasensory perception, the spontaneous psychic experience and the paranormal element of the prophetic function is pronounced.

11. The correlations in attitude, personality, working conditions, description of experience, and after effects of the prophet, the spontaneous psychic of today and the laboratory subject in extrasensory perception are so convincing





that they make extrasensory perception the most reasonable explanation of the paranormal element of the prophetic function.

12. The extrasensory experiences function through the superconscious dimension of the mind.

13. The superconscious experience is above the critical judgment of the conscious mind, occurring when sense perceptions of the material world, active alertness of the conscious mind and memory associations of the past have faded from the focus and attention of mental activity.

14. Superconscious realization may have an integrating effect on the personality and may leave it with a better understanding of the higher values of human life.





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## ABSTRACT

The prophets of the religious cultures of the world have created an office outstanding for its unique character and its revolutionary accomplishments. Their personalities, abilities, experiences and activities have created religious history. Because of its unusual character, religious prophecy offers a challenge to all who would understand more fully the workings of the human mind. The problem of this dissertation is to determine whether psychology can enlarge our understanding of the function of prophecy, both in its relation to the prophet and in its effect on the prophet's people.

It aids our understanding of the prophet and his activity if we study his origin in the cultures of antiquity. Though they differ radically, magic, divination and prophecy are steps in that order in the evolutionary development of religious mediation. More primitive cultures believed that the divine spirit possessed the spirit of the prophet to the extent that the personality of the prophet was overruled and overpowered. More advanced cultures believed the divine spirit communicated his will to the mind of the prophet. As an advanced stage was reached in a particular culture, the preceding one became outmoded, and finally disrespected and outlawed. Reason and reflection are attributes of prophecy in its highest development.





The nature of the prophet was particularly fitted for his office. His gifts which developed through his cultural encouragement distinguished him from the ordinary religious individual. Though the personality of the prophet was widely divergent among the representatives of the office, it had specific and basic qualities which stimulated the prophetic function. A pronounced element of the paranormal is associated with that function. The prophet often had revelation experiences through dreams, visual and auditory impressions, and visions. Regardless of the interpretation of the prophet's revelation and inspiration, ecstasy, frenzied or mystical, was usually a factor in his experience of the presence of the deity and his knowledge of the will of the deity. Frenzied ecstasy was associated more with primitive cultures as an evidence of possession, while mystical ecstasy was usually the manner in which the prophets of more advanced cultures received their revelation. The prophet was intensely conscious of the presence of God.

The great prophets were men of keen intellects. Students of history, authorities in social and ethical living, astute observers of human nature, they were practicing psychologists. The prophet's intellectual genius was matched by his poetic abilities. It was these normal psychological powers together with his paranormal abilities in receiving





revelation that qualified him for his task, both in his own estimation and in that of his people. The soundness of his mind was not impaired by his visionary experiences. These were not typically pathological and differed from hallucinations in that they integrated his personality, added to his knowledge and improved his mind, while hallucinations disintegrate the personality and injure coherent mentality.

The prophet served a vital need, or his office would never have survived. He gave his civilization mediation, communication, from the spiritual world. Though he may not always have been called a prophet, and though he may even at times have been associated in a priestly manner with the worship cultus, the prophet was distinguished in all cultures by his function as an authoritative mediator for the deity to the people. He was the spokesman for God. His inspiration was his *modus operandi* as the mouthpiece of the deity.

He saw his task as interpreting the will of God by preaching, teaching, and counseling the people in practical steps of religious and ethical progress. He foresaw future events and warned the people how to prepare for them. His predictions of the future were deductions both from recognized moral principles and paranormal revelations. When they were products of normal psychological powers the predictions were often conditional, reasoned inferences from the prophet's acute understanding of spiritual law, human nature, history,





and social and causal relationships. They were dependent upon possible changing conditions due to the cause and effect relationship inherent in spiritual or moral law. Due to his paranormal psychological powers the predictions were often unconditional, as he precognitively perceived an event of the future. Not that the conditional would be overruled in the prediction, but that the conditions which could change the prediction would not materialize.

Aware of the moral law of the world, of conditions as they were and as they ought to be, the prophet was frequently in conflict with the priests and rulers of his culture. Whenever ethical standards were violated by priest or ruler, regardless of the substitution of sacrifice or royal authority, they were soon exposed to the denunciation of the prophet.

Prophecy reached its acme in the Hebrew prophet. He was unique, not always in method, but in message. Identifying himself with Yahweh's cause, though it meant social ostracism, he tested each experience with what he knew as Yahweh's nature and will. He was emotionally sensitive to human need, a passionate champion for human justice, an unflinching spokesman for his God.

From the prophets of old to the psychics of the present day there have been claims for extrasensory perception. The prophets manifested it in their mediation, the poets have





described it as their inspiration, others, in their intimate human relationships. Diminishing prejudice in scientific circles against the possibility of nonrational, nonphysical occurrences has stimulated the progress of psychical research. Important data from the investigations of The British Society for Psychical Research, The American Society for Psychical Research, The Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University, and others, have established a science. As telepathy, clairvoyance, postcognition and precognition were being tested in the laboratory, the paranormal element in the prophetic function was being indirectly analyzed. What was once regarded as a supernatural mystery is now believed to be a natural though nonphysical ability of the human mind. Though extrasensory perception can be brought under only slight conscious control, experimentation has shown that it responds to favorable conditions, which may be formulated as laws.

Spontaneous psychical occurrences as premonitions, telepathic transferences, predictive dreams, clairvoyant impressions, are claimed by many in every age. The laboratory has sought to reproduce the conditions in order to test the possibility of extrasensory perception, and the subsequent data have been predominately positive. The personalities, environmental conditions and mental preparation conducive to positive results in the laboratory are those which encourage





spontaneous psychical occurrences. They are also the conditions and qualifications which facilitate the paranormal in the prophetic function. The introspective descriptions of the subject, the experience itself and the after effect of the subject in the laboratory, among the spontaneous psychics and professional mediums in our society, and of the prophets, show marked similarities. Of particular importance is the illumination that the laboratory experiments with precognition have given to the unconditional predictions of the future made by the prophets. The correlations in attitude, personality, working conditions, description of experience and after effects of the prophet, the spontaneous psychic and professional medium, and the laboratory subject in extrasensory perception, are so convincing that they make extrasensory perception the most reasonable explanation of the description of paranormal elements in the prophetic function.

The phenomenon of extrasensory perception as well as the more complicated visionary experiences of the prophets and inspirational invasions of the poets, scientists, artists and philosophers, are not primarily the functions of the subconscious mind. They are opposite in character from the activities of the subconscious, being sharply focused, dissociated with the past and of a nonphysical, supra-individual nature. They are of a superconscious nature. It is only reasonable from the standpoint of modern psychology to assume





a superconscious dimension of the mind to account for these phenomena of a superconscious nature, even as we assume a subconscious dimension to account for those of a subconscious nature. The superconscious experience is above the critical judgment of the conscious mind, occurring when sense perceptions of the material world, active alertness of the conscious mind and memory associations of the past have faded from the focus and attention of mental activity. The prophet as well as the mystic reached their experiences of God through practices, voluntary or involuntary, which cultivated superconscious realization. These practices often consist of meditation upon symbols or thoughts of religious significance.

Superconscious realization may have an integrating effect on the personality and may leave the mind with a better understanding of the higher values of human life. Its highest form is an experiencing of the cosmic consciousness with which the individual consciousness unites. Developing the prophetic spirit consists in cultivating the mental and spiritual discipline which encourages superconscious realization.





## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

William E. Hulme was born January 25, 1920 at Youngstown, Ohio, the son of William and Carrie Hulme. Following his graduation from South High School of that city in 1938, he enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts at Capital University at Columbus, Ohio. In the sophomore year he decided to study for the ministry. In 1942 he graduated from Capital University with the B. S. degree, a major in Biology. In the fall of the same year he entered the Evangelical Lutheran Seminary at Capital University. In preparation for the B. D. thesis he became interested in the application of religion to mental health. This interest led him to the School of Theology at Boston University, following his graduation from the Seminary in 1945 with the B. D. degree. At Boston University he enrolled for graduate work in the Psychology of Religion under Dr. Paul E. Johnson. While engaged in this study he decided to prepare for the PH. D. degree in that subject. Concluding his residence work in 1946 he accepted the pastorate of Clinton Heights Lutheran Church at Columbus, Ohio, and was ordained into the ministry of the American Lutheran Church. In 1946 he married Miss Lucy Combs of Zanesville, Ohio also a graduate of Capital University. A daughter, Sally Kathleen, was born in 1947.









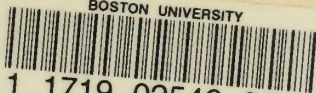








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